The Herald-Palladium

hp

GOOD FELLOW FUND

Donate: TheHP.com/goodfellows

We're here to help Michigan get back to work.
Which means we are bringing you virtual services!
Visit miworks.org/online-resources for more info.

To schedule an appointment:
(800) 285-9675 | miworks.org

MICHIGAN WORKS!
Berrien • Cass • Van Buren

YEAR IN REVIEW

A look back at 2020

Special Section

TheHP.com @HeraldPalladium HeraldPalladium HeraldPalladium

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2020

$2

Bucking the trend

Local health officials see good reason for cheer in latest COVID stats

By ALEXANDRA NEWMAN
HP Staff Writer

BENTON TOWNSHIP — Local health officials were very optimistic Wednesday about the direction the third wave of COVID-19 has taken in Berrien County.

"When you see the trends across the country, we're kind of beating the odds in Berrien County," Dr. Loren Hamel, president of Spectrum Health Lakeland, said in a Facebook Live event Wednesday morning.

The county is averaging about 37 new COVID-19 cases a day, compared to about 165 a day just before Thanksgiving.

On Wednesday, the county recorded 38 new COVID cases and 68 new recoveries. That brought the number of active cases in the county to about 2,169. Last Wednesday, the county was at about 2,779 active cases.

"There's a lot of evidence toward there being less community transmission," Nicki Britten, health officer for the Berrien County Health Department (BCHD), said during the event.

She said it's hard to say exactly what's causing it, but health officials believe it's a combination of individual efforts to scale back holiday celebrations, along with a void of large public gatherings.

"We're very encouraged by the fact we're seeing these decreasing numbers," Britten said.

COVID deaths, however, remain pretty high, with nine being added to the county's total on Tuesday this week. As of Wednesday, the county was at 59 COVID deaths for the month of December, with a total of 168 deaths.

Most of the deaths continue to be people over the age of 40, though one of the recent deaths was someone in their 20s, according to the county's COVID data dashboard.

Britten said she hopes to see a similar slowdown in deaths over the next few weeks.

COVID hospitalizations are holding steady, but down from where they were in early December.

Hamel said, as of Wednesday morning, there were 39 COVID patients at the hospital who are still really sick, and 13 that are admitted, but recovering.

Last Wednesday, the hospital had reported a similar number of patients admitted, but that's down from 65 the week before that.

See **COVID**, page A6

PLAYGROUND CLOSED
BY ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR OF MICHIGAN'S EXECUTIVE ORDER No. 2020-9 PLACES OF PUBLIC AMUSEMENT ARE CLOSED, DUE TO (COVID-19)
10 more COVID-19 cases in Mich.
MHSAA SUSPENDS POSTSEASON
CANCELED
Blossomtime, other events postponed
Senior PGA Championship canceled
Virus cancels Grand Floral Parade
Gov: Stay home
SHOW GOES ON WITHOUT AUDIENCE
LMC baseball keeps on working
CAMPERS READY AT COOK, JUST IN CASE
Berrien braces for COVID-19 surge
No birthday party, no problem
Governor extends stay-home order
Does governor's order go too far?
'It's about saving lives'
Berrien COVID numbers continue steep rise

Voices from 2020

HP staff shares personal reflections on a strange year

All year, we've shared stories of people facing the challenges of 2020. Today, we've asked our reporters and editors to turn the tables. Instead of sharing other people's stories, we've asked them to share their own. In this edition, you will find short essays from members of The HP staff about how 2020 has affected them.

Dave Brown

Most of us are more than ready to turn the calendar page tomorrow and leave 2020 behind. It has been a year we'd like to forget but know we never will.

I'll avoid using superlatives to describe the year. Calling it the worst year ever (as many have), would be laughable to anyone in America who lived through the Great Depression, saw the devastation of World War II or the Civil War, or who lived their life as a slave.

But for many of us, 2020 has brought hardship and even tragedy. We've all used the word *unprecedented* a lot.

As The Herald-Palladium staff has covered this unusual year for readers in Southwest Michigan, we've strived to include as many voices as possible. Through our stories this year you heard from COVID-19 patients who barely survived the disease. You heard from nurses and doctors who have given so much and risked so much to help our community fight the virus.

We shared the stories of small business owners facing the loss of their life's work due to the virus and government-forced shutdowns. Teachers and students told of their struggles – including successes and failures – to carry on the educational process remotely.

Religious leaders told us about the difficulty of meeting their congregants' spiritual needs while avoiding personal contact – and the struggle of holding their congregations together when people have strongly-held and differing opinions about how to proceed.

Local health officials were given plenty of coverage on our news pages to share potentially life-saving information about steps to take to minimize risks.

And ordinary people, just trying to live their lives, voiced their fears, their anger, their disappointments – and their hopes and joys. Many people found silver linings on the 2020 cloud, and we've been glad to share them.

Of course, the pandemic wasn't the only event that created stress in 2020. As we covered a very polarizing election campaign, our readers heard from people across the political spectrum. We tried to give voice to every side and attempted, often unsuccessfully, to keep the conversation respectful.

As the nation and our community faced, again, a reminder of our sad racial history, we shared many voices of people in Southwest Michigan trying to come together, hoping to break through a racial divide that, even after so many years of progress, still remains for too many people.

All of those voices from people experiencing the various challenges of 2020, we hope, have made our readers better informed and maybe a little more understanding of people who don't share their opinions.

We hope the essays in this edition from our staff will help readers reflect on the year that is ending and to look forward to a brighter future.

Dave Brown is the managing editor of The Herald-Palladium.

Alone

By DALE BREWER
HP Local News Editor

BREWER

Like so many others during this terrible pandemic, my father died – alone – in 2020.

He wasn't struck down by COVID-19. His health had been failing for some time before the pandemic hit. So what I missed this year, as did my mom and brothers, was a sense of normalcy during what is a difficult time under any circumstance.

The timing of it all was surreal – almost cruel.

In March, Dad spent his 80th birthday recovering in the hospital from pacemaker surgery. He and my mom spent their 60th wedding anniversary in the hospital, still hopeful he would bounce back. The following day he was admitted to long-term care – the very same day the facility told all family members they could no longer visit loved ones due to the coronavirus gathering steam across America.

It was a rational precaution that every long-term care and senior living center took in a desperate bid to shield this most-vulnerable population.

A rational move – and yet so devastating.

A little history: My Mom met Dad when she was 15, a sophomore walking the halls at old Galien High School. He was 16 and a grade above. The future homecoming queen had met her king.

Through 60 years of marriage these high school sweethearts would hardly be separated. Not until the very end. Not until COVID.

As the outside world burned, Dad's health quickly deteriorated. You see, for years Mom had been my father's lifeline in almost every sense. Now mostly alone in the facility, his confusion, fear and irritability grew worse by the day. It was palpable in his voice and heartbreaking to hear.

While FaceTime and Skype are great, they are only of limited comfort to the sick and dying. A small screen is a poor substitute to a warm and loving hand.

Only at the very end, after an excruciating month, were we allowed to say our final good-byes in person.

A nurse later told us Dad was peaceful when he passed early one morning. Or maybe that's just something they tell grieving family members. I like to believe it was the former.

We did our best in the days that followed. There was no visitation. No big funeral service. No meal afterwards. We eulogized Dad in front of close family and a few dear friends and said goodbye – pandemic-style – on a bitter cold and windswept afternoon at the cemetery. Generations of family headstones stood near, worn and weathered sentinels to the ceremony.

Mom was stoic throughout. Yet I still can't stand the memory of her sons being afraid to hug her, fearful of turning a funeral into a tragedy, lest one of us be carrying a potential killer.

I don't share this story in a bid for sympathy, or to suggest our grief was somehow greater than that of others. I do it to remember the countless people who've suffered alone in 2020, including thousands of COVID-19 victims who have endured unbearable pain and loneliness in bleak COVID wards, comforted in person only by loving but exhausted health care heroes.

The effects have extended far beyond hospitals. So many others have also been denied contact with loved ones at life's major milestones. Countless graduations, birthdays, anniversaries, weddings and holidays have come and gone, sparsely attended or attended not at all.

Or, saddest of all, like my mother and dying father, we have suffered alone when loving and close familial bonds were needed most.

Statistics tell us daily how many people have contracted COVID-19, how many people have died from it and how many have recovered. Much harder to fathom is how so many have managed their pain, suffering, grief or depression on their own.

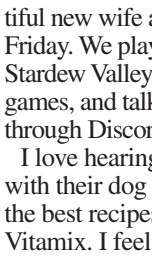
Alone.

For a social species that craves company, social distance too often has meant solitary confinement.

To me this will be the legacy of The Great Plague of 2020, the year we had to separate to be safe.

Silver linings

By LOUISE WREGE
HP Staff Writer


WREGE

As many of us stay isolated with our family groups to slow the spread of COVID-19, it's easy to become depressed.

I've spent my share of time lingering in bed, wondering if it's even worth getting up.

My family had big plans for 2020. They included celebrating my older son's marriage in a big bash in Kalamazoo and visiting my other son in Japan as he studied abroad. Both were cancelled due to the pandemic.

But I also have so much to be thankful for.

One of the silver linings for me now is that I'm spending more time with my older son, even though he lives in California.

Since April, I've been playing online games through Steam with him and his beautiful new wife almost every Friday. We play Monaco and Stardew Valley, among other games, and talk to each other through Discord.

I love hearing them fuss with their dog or talk about the best recipes for their new Vitamix. I feel closer to them now than if they had spent a few days in Michigan in October, although I still would have liked to see them.

Another silver lining was when the Western Michigan University dorms closed in March. I got to spend an extra six months with my younger son when he moved back home to finish his classes online and to take summer classes.

Perhaps the biggest silver lining is spending more time with my husband. We set up temporary offices in the house – mine in a spare bedroom and his in the family room.

Before the pandemic, we didn't see much of each other because our work hours are so different. His work day usually starts at 7:30 a.m. while mine starts later due to night meetings. When he's home relaxing, I'm often still at a meeting. Now, he's just a few steps away. It's easy to get up, stretch, and touch bases with him for five minutes here and there.

Before the pandemic, we wondered if we would get along once we retired and had more time together.

After a couple of weeks of working out of our home, we realized we will be just fine. Which is good because he actually did retire Dec. 1.

I'm not saying it's all been roses. I miss interviewing people over a latte at a local coffee shop.

I miss spending time with my friends, especially my best friend from college who lives in the Detroit area.

And my heart breaks for people who have lost loved ones to COVID-19.

But life goes on. I have to focus on the positive, or I spend way too much time in my bed.

More essays on page A4

The Newspaper for Southwest Michigan

To subscribe or report delivery problems, call 429-1396

Index

Classifieds	B6	Features	B2	Our Town	B3	State|Nation	A2
Comics	B4	Local	A3	Puzzles	B3	Television	B2
Entertainment	B3	Obituaries	A5	Sports	B1	Weather	A6

Tomorrow's Weather

High 35 Low 27

6 50645 49085 0

Whitmer vetoes bill that would limit virus-related orders

DETROIT (AP) — Gov. Gretchen Whitmer vetoed a bill Wednesday that would kill emergency public health orders after 28 days unless the Legislature approved, another shot in the power struggle between Michigan's Democratic chief executive and the state's Republican lawmakers over how to manage the coronavirus pandemic.

The bill "would recklessly undermine" efforts by the Department of Health and Human Services to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus, Whitmer said.

"Unfortunately, epidemics are not limited to 28 days. We should not so limit our ability to respond to them," the governor said.

Whitmer has turned to her health department to set many virus-related rules in Michigan, including mask mandates, limits on gathering sizes, and a ban on indoor restaurant dining, since losing a court case in October. The state Supreme Court said a 1945 law that served as the foundation for months of Whitmer's unilateral orders was unconstitutional.

Republicans who control the House and Senate have repeatedly complained that Whitmer has ignored them in making COVID-19 policies and ordered too many one-size-fits-all remedies.

The state reported more than 4,200 new cases Wednesday and 51 deaths. More than 12,000 Michigan residents have died since March.

"We all want this pandemic to be over. Let's do what needs to be done now so we can return to a strong economy and normal day-to-day activities," Whitmer said in her veto letter.

She also vetoed a bill that would have repealed the '45 law that was declared unconstitutional.

Vaccines

Judges were told they could see more petitions seeking temporary guardians for people in long-term care facilities. The issue is whether residents can give consent for the COVID-19 vaccine.

"It is likely that the issue of capacity to consent to inoculation may arise for those residents who are incapacitated ... and who do not have a patient advocate or a guardian who may act on their behalf," the State Court Administrative Office said.

"You will need to know which facilities are in line for vaccinations and when those vaccinations might start," the memo stated.

More than 5,000 long-term care facilities have signed up to receive the Moderna vaccine, said Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, Michigan's chief medical executive. There are 91,000 people there, including staff.

The University of Michigan said hundreds of employees and students who are in the first category to get the vaccine will receive a Pfizer-BioNTech dose, starting Thursday at the football stadium.

LOTTERIES

Wednesday drawings

Michigan
Classic Lotto 47
07-21-22-28-37-38
Poker Lotto
KS-9C-5D-9D-3S
Midday Daily 3
2-8-8
Midday Daily 4
0-4-4-4
Daily 3
8-0-9
Daily 4
3-4-8-7
Fantasy 5
01-03-04-33-38
Estimated jackpot
$495,000
Keno
08-10-12-15-18-19-20-31-35-36-44-49-51-58-59-61-63-64-66-67-68-75

Tuesday drawings

Indiana
Cash 5
08-09-12-18-41
Estimated jackpot
$80,000
Cash4Life
12-21-23-24-36, Cash Ball: 1
Quick Draw Midday
02-03-05-08-10-17-24-27-31-35-42-43-44-50-65-70-71-73-77-80, BE: 80
Daily Three-Midday
7-6-4, SB: 8
Daily Three-Evening
0-5-9, SB: 0
Daily Four-Midday
8-8-9-2, SB: 8
Daily Four-Evening
4-9-3-1, SB: 0
Quick Draw Evening
02-04-06-08-12-14-21-23-40-46-49-58-59-60-63-65-68-73-75-78, BE: 23
Mega Millions
01-31-35-48-62, Mega Ball: 19, Megaplier: 3
Illinois
LuckyDay Lotto Midday
04-14-19-28-37
Estimated jackpot
$350,000
Pick Three-Midday
4-1-7, Fireball: 4
Pick Three-Evening
9-6-5, Fireball: 6
Pick Four-Midday
4-6-4-7, Fireball: 3
Pick Four-Evening
8-6-6-7, Fireball: 6
Lucky Day Lotto
09-11-21-22-43

– The Associated Press

Contact us

To contact the Newsroom, send an email to one of the addresses listed below, call one of the direct lines listed below, or call our main office at 429-2400 and ask for one of the extensions listed below.

News tip
Ext. 293
localnews@TheHP.com

Features
Ext. 225
focus@TheHP.com

Letters to the Editor
Ext. 295
letters@TheHP.com

Sports
Ext. 294, or 429-1294
sports@TheHP.com

Obituaries
Ext. 295, or 429-2295
obits@TheHP.com

Photo
Ext. 204
photos@TheHP.com

To order reprints of staff photos or high-quality reproductions of full pages, visit www.TheHP.com and click on the Photo Gallery and Reprints link.

The Herald-Palladium

P.O. Box 128 • 3450 Hollywood Road • St. Joseph, MI 49085
Volume 152, Number 268

For delivery and subscription information, call 269-429-1396 or email delivery@TheHP.com
9 a.m.-2 p.m. Mondays-Fridays.
If your paper is missed, please call 269-429-1396.

To place a classified ad, call 269-429-4484.

To reach any other department, call our main number at 269-429-2400.

Main number hours are 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Mondays-Fridays.

Cash payments and checks are accepted in our drop box outside the lobby. The Circulation and Classified departments can accept credit card payments via telephone during their normal hours.

Our building is currently closed to the public because of the coronavirus.

MAIN FAX 429-7661
NEWSROOM FAX 429-4398
CLASSIFIED ADV. FAX 429-8344

Home delivery rates:
Mail delivery $30.25/4 wks
EZ-Pay $26.40/month

All subscriptions are payable in advance. Other payment options available by calling Subscriber Services at 269-429-2400.

The Herald-Palladium is printed for your convenience with low-ruboff soy ink and with newsprint containing recycled paper.

David Holgate Publisher
Dave Brown Managing Editor
Sara Horton Advertising Director
Julie Simpleman Circulation Director
Jenn Mann Business Manager

The Herald-Palladium is published daily, Mondays through Saturdays, except for USPS holidays, at 3450 Hollywood Road, St. Joseph, MI and is a consolidation of The Herald-Press and The News-Palladium. Periodicals Mail postage paid at St. Joseph, MI (USPS 387-440). Postmaster: Send change of address to P.O. Box 128, St. Joseph, MI 49085. Member of The Associated Press.

PRINTED WITH SOY INK

Susan Walsh / AP

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Ky., walks back to his office on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday.

Trump push on $2K checks flops as Senate won't vote

By LISA MASCARO
AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON — Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell all but shut the door Wednesday on President Donald Trump's push for $2,000 COVID-19 relief checks, declaring Congress has provided enough pandemic aid as he blocked another attempt by Democrats to force a vote.

The GOP leader made clear he is unwilling to budge, despite political pressure from Trump and even some fellow Republican senators demanding action. Trump wants the recent $600 in aid increased threefold. But McConnell dismissed the idea of bigger "survival checks" approved by the House, saying the money would go to plenty of American households that just don't need it.

McConnell's refusal to act means the additional relief Trump wanted is all but dead.

"We just approved almost a trillion dollars in aid a few days ago," McConnell said, referring to the year-end package Trump signed into law.

McConnell added, "if specific, struggling households still need more help," the Senate will consider "smart targeted aid. Not another firehose of borrowed money."

The showdown between the outgoing president and his own Republican Party over the $2,000 checks has thrown Congress into a chaotic year-end session just days before new lawmakers are set to be sworn into office.

It's one last standoff, together with the override of Trump's veto of a sweeping defense bill, that will punctuate the president's final days and deepen the GOP's divide between its new wing of Trump-styled populists and what had been mainstay conservative views against government spending.

Trump has been berating the GOP leaders, and tweeted, "$2000 ASAP!"

President-elect Joe Biden also supports the payments and wants to build on what he calls a "downpayment" on relief.

"In this moment of historic crisis and untold economic pain for countless American families, the President-elect supports $2,000 direct payments as passed by the House," said Biden transition spokesman Andrew Bates.

The roadblock set by Senate Republicans appears insurmountable. Most GOP senators seemed to accept the inaction even as a growing number of Republicans, including two senators in runoff elections on Jan. 5 in Georgia, agree with Trump's demand, some wary of bucking him.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said the $600 checks would begin to go out Wednesday. Congress had settled on smaller payments in a compromise over the big, year-end COVID relief and government funding bill that Trump reluctantly signed into law. Before signing, though, Trump demanded more.

For a second day in a row, Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer tried to force a vote on the bill approved by the House meeting Trump's demand for the $2,000 checks.

"What we're seeing right now is Leader McConnell trying to kill the checks – the $2,000 checks desperately needed by so many American families," Schumer said.

With the Georgia Senate runoff elections days away, leading Republicans warned that the GOP's refusal to provide more aid as the virus worsens could jeopardize the outcome of those races.

Georgia's GOP Sens. David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler are trying to fend off Democrats Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock in runoff elections that will determine which party has the Senate majority. The two Republicans announced support for Trump's call for more generous checks.

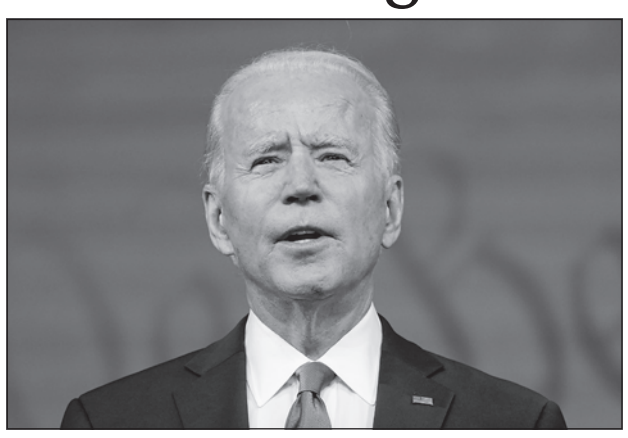
"The Senate Republicans risk throwing away two seats and control of the Senate," Newt Gingrich, the former congressional leader, said on Fox News.

McConnell has tried to shield his divided Republicans from a difficult vote. On Wednesday he suggested he had kept his word to start a "process" to address Trump's demands, even if it means no votes will actually be taken.

"It's no secret Republicans have a diversity of views," he said.

Missouri senator to contest Biden's Electoral College win

By MARY CLARE JALONICK
Associated Press



Patrick Semansky / AP

President-elect Joe Biden speaks after the Electoral College formally elected him as president on Dec. 14 at The Queen theater in Wilmington, Del.

WASHINGTON — Sen. Josh Hawley, R-Mo., said Wednesday he will raise objections next week when Congress meets to affirm President-elect Joe Biden's victory in the election, forcing House and Senate votes that are likely to delay – but in no way alter – the final certification of Biden's win.

President Donald Trump has, without evidence, claimed there was widespread fraud in the election. He has pushed Republican senators to pursue his unfounded charges even though the Electoral College this month cemented Biden's 306-232 victory and multiple legal efforts to challenge the results have failed.

A group of Republicans in the Democratic-majority House have already said they will object on Trump's behalf during the Jan. 6 count of electoral votes, and they had needed just a single senator to go along with them to force votes in both chambers.

Without giving specifics or evidence, Hawley said he would object because "some states, including notably Pennsylvania" did not follow their own election laws. Lawsuits challenging Biden's victory in Pennsylvania have been unsuccessful.

"At the very least, Congress should investigate allegations of voter fraud and adopt measures to secure the integrity of our elections," Hawley said in a statement. He also criticized the way Facebook and Twitter handled content related to the election, characterizing it as an effort to help Biden.

Biden transition spokeswoman Jen Psaki dismissed Hawley's move as "antics" that will have no bearing on Biden being sworn in on Jan. 20.

"The American people spoke resoundingly in this election and 81 million people have voted for Joe Biden and Kamala Harris," Psaki said in a call with reporters. She added: "Congress will certify the results of the election as they do every four years."

White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows praised Hawley on Twitter for "unapologetically standing up for election integrity."

When Congress convenes to certify the Electoral College results, any lawmaker can object to a state's votes on any grounds. But the objection is not taken up unless it is in writing and signed by both a member of the House and a member of the Senate.

When there is such a request, then the joint session suspends and the House and Senate go into separate sessions to consider it. For the objection to be sustained, both chambers must agree to it by a simple majority vote. If they disagree, the original electoral votes are counted.

Scientists trying to understand new virus variant

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Does it spread more easily? Make people sicker? Mean that treatments and vaccines won't work? Questions are multiplying as fast as new variants of the coronavirus, especially the one moving through England and now popping up in the U.S. and other countries.

Scientists say there is reason for concern and more to learn but that the new variants should not cause alarm.

Worry has been growing since before Christmas, when Britain's prime minister said the coronavirus variant seemed to spread more easily than earlier ones and was moving rapidly through England. On Tuesday, Colorado health officials said they had found it there.

Here are some questions and answers on what's known about the virus so far.

Q: Where did this new variant come from?

A: New variants have been seen almost since the virus was first detected in China nearly a year ago. Viruses often mutate, or develop small changes, as they reproduce and move through a population.

Most changes are trivial. "It's the change of one or two letters in the genetic alphabet that doesn't make much difference in the ability to cause disease," said Dr. Philip Landrigan, a former Centers for Disease Control and Prevention scientist who directs a global health program at Boston College.

A more concerning situation is when a virus mutates by changing the proteins on its surface to help it escape from drugs or the immune system, or if it acquires a lot of changes that make it very different from previous versions.

Q: How does one variant become dominant?

A: That can happen if one variant takes hold and starts spreading in an area, or because "super spreader" events helped it become established.

It also can happen if a mutation gives a new variant an advantage, such as helping it spread more easily than other ones that are circulating.

Scientists are still working to confirm whether the variant in England spreads more easily, but they are finding some evidence that it does. The variant "out-competes the other strains and moves faster and infects more people, so it wins the race," Landrigan said.

The British variant was first detected in September, WHO officials said. A new South African variant also has emerged.

Q: What's worrisome about the british variant?

A: It has many mutations – nearly two dozen – and eight are on the spike protein that the virus uses to attach to and infect cells. The spike is what vaccines and antibody drugs target.

Dr. Ravi Gupta, a virus expert at the University of Cambridge in England, said modeling studies suggest it may be up to two times more infectious than the version that's been most common in England so far. He and other researchers posted a report of it on a website scientists use to quickly share developments, but it has not been formally reviewed or published in a journal.

Q: Does it make people sicker or more likely to die?

A: "There's no indication that either of those is true, but clearly those are two issues we've got to watch," Landrigan said. As more patients get infected with the new variant, "they'll know fairly soon if the new strain makes people sicker."

A WHO outbreak expert, Maria Van Kerkhove, said that "the information that we have so far is that there isn't a change" in the kind of illness or its severity.

hp LOCAL & STATE

Photos by Don Campbell / HP staff

Skiiers and snowboarders hit the runs at Timber Ridge Ski Area in Gobles on Tuesday morning.

Social distancing on the slopes

Area ski season off to strong start with extra precautions in place

By ALEXANDRA NEWMAN
HP Staff Writer

GOBLES — Those looking to get out of their homes this winter during the pandemic have a few options when it comes to the area's ski, snowboarding and tubing hills.

The snow sports season has been decent so far, with cold enough temperatures in mid-December to start making snow.

"It's going good. We've had all sorts of new skiers, beginners, just people wanting to get out and get some fresh air," Amy Scrab, general manager of Timber Ridge Ski Area near Gobles, said this week.

Timber Ridge opened for the season on Dec. 18; Bittersweet Ski Resort near Otsego in Allegan County opened on Dec. 17; and Swiss Valley Ski & Snowboard Area near Jones in Cass County opened on Monday.

Alex Linn, snow sports director at Swiss Valley, said that while many things will look different this year with COVID-19 protocols in place, it's going to be a very similar experience to what people are used to.

"There will just be some extra things in place to keep people spaced apart," he said.

For example, the cafeteria is running a bit differently, with only a certain amount of people allowed in the area at a time. Customer service employees are all behind plexiglass.

"We also now have an outdoor ticket counter," he said. "We basically put a deck on our building so you can show up and make it to the hill without ever going inside of a building, if you want."

The ski areas have all been creative when it comes to keeping people outside, spaced apart and warm, building fire pits and investing in heaters.

Victor Gayheart, general manager at Bittersweet, said he bought about 20 new picnic tables this year, as well as more ski racks. They also built a snack hut, as did Timber Ridge.

Face covering signs are posted to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 at Timber Ridge Ski Area in Gobles.

Scrab said people are welcome to bring picnic lunches themselves. They just have to eat outside.

"That's the hardest thing for me, to not say, 'Go on in and warm up. Get some coffee.' They can't, you know?" she said.

Scrab said people have taken to booting-up at their cars so that they don't have to leave their shoes outside.

Gayheart said these new systems are working, for now.

"People are enjoying it as long as the weather is nice, and it has been nice. It'll probably be a different story when it gets colder and snowier," he said.

Gayheart, Scrab and Linn said folks have been complying with mask requirements.

"They want to be there, so the ski community has been pretty cool about doing what we've got to do to go ski," Linn said.

They said with it being an outdoor winter sport, it helps to have something over your face to keep you warm anyways. There have only had to be a few reminders for people to pull them up.

Scrab said Timber Ridge got some more new snow-making guns this year for better snow-making, and the tubing hill finally opened this week.

"I would encourage people to think about coming out to go tubing, because anyone can do that. That's not as expensive for families as skiing is. Just come on out and enjoy it," she said.

Gayheart said Bittersweet has been very busy even though they opened later this year than they have the past few years.

A skier rides a ski lift as a snow cannon runs at Timber Ridge Ski Area on Tuesday.

Skiiers gather around a fire to stay warm Tuesday at Timber Ridge.

"Everybody seems to be happy. I think everyone just wants to be outside," he said. "The snow conditions have been perfect. We're about 95 percent open. Come on out and have a good time."

Last year, Swiss Valley opened just before Christmas, and they almost made it this year.

"We were a little behind that this season, but it varies so much. It's so weather dependent," Linn said. "For years there, we would often get past Christmas into January before we opened, and we've made a big big push on the snow-making side to find ways to try to get us open a little earlier."

He expects the ski areas will stay pretty busy through winter break.

"I just want people to know we're still open, we're still skiing and all we're asking is people comply with social distancing marks on the floor and wear their masks, and understand that we're all going to continue skiing and riding and do what we've got to do to get through this together," he said.

"So there are some things that are different, but if you look out at the hill, it just looks like people are skiing at Swiss Valley."

Contact: anewman@TheHP.com, 932-0357, Twitter: @HPANewman

BERRIEN COUNTY

Some CARES Act money may have to be returned

By LOUISE WREGE
HP Staff Writer

ST. JOSEPH — The Berrien County Board of Commissioners has approved spending most of the almost $1.8 million the county received in federal CARES Act money by the Wednesday deadline, leaving only $39,513 that wasn't allocated, Financial Services Director Doug James told commissioners during a special meeting Wednesday.

But another $106,615 for projects that have been approved may have to be returned because the equipment isn't available. James said the money is for a new multimedia system in the board of commissioners room and computer-related expenses.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act money was given to the states, which developed programs to distribute the funds.

Administrator Brian Dissette said that at the federal level, the deadline for spending the money has been extended. He said they are waiting to hear if the state is also extending the deadline.

"If that occurs, then we're completely good," he said. "Further, if CARES Act phase two rolls out the way we think it's going to at the federal level, without a doubt we've got projects cued up and ready for the first part of 2021."

Dissette said his staff worked tirelessly to put together projects that qualified so almost all of the money could be spent.

James said much of the money was used to cover expenses related to extra PPE and testing needed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In other business, board Chairman Mac Elliott said county offices will close at 3 p.m. today instead of the usual 5 p.m., to give staff a break.

"We recognize that we have a lot of people who have been working a lot of hours," he said.

Offices are closed Friday for the New Year's Day holiday.

The board's next meeting will be at 8:35 a.m. Jan. 7 instead of the usual 10:30 a.m. Elliott said Berrien County Clerk Sharon Tyler will be appointed as the temporary chair of the organizational meeting, where the board's chair and vice chair will be elected and standing committee assignments will be decided.

Contact: lwrege@TheHP.com, 932-0361, Twitter: @HPWrege

Woman shot at South Haven apartment

By HP STAFF

SOUTH HAVEN — Police are seeking charges against a South Haven man who allegedly shot a woman in the early hours of Wednesday.

Police were called to Harbor View Apartment complex at Indiana Avenue and Eagle Street around 6 a.m. for a reported shooting.

As of Wednesday afternoon, South Haven police were still investigating.

Sgt. Patrick Carlotto said a male resident in the apartment complex had a female guest in his home when the shooting occurred.

"She was a guest of the resident shot by the resident," he said.

No details of what led to the shooting have been released. When asked whether it was a dispute, Carlotto stated that the two individuals had had disputes in the past, but that they are not speculating about this incident.

Police also are not releasing the names of the two people involved until the investigation has concluded.

After first responders from South Haven Area Emergency Services arrived to the apartment complex, they transported the shooting victim to Bronson Methodist Hospital in Kalamazoo.

Police have detained the suspect and on Wednesday afternoon were seeking charges against him, according to Carlotto, who said other apartment residents should not be afraid of further violence.

"We are going to the prosecutor's office and determine what charges may be appropriate (against the suspect)," he said.

Good Fellow Fund soars past goal

Generous donors sent in $7,165 to the Good Fellow Fund this week, smashing our $35,000 goal and raising the total collected so far to $41,280. An anonymous $5,000 donation provided the biggest boost.

The Herald-Palladium will continue to accept donations through next Thursday. They can be mailed to The Herald-Palladium, P.O. Box 128, St. Joseph, MI 49085, or made online at www.TheHP.com/goodfellows.

Here are donations sent in this week: A retired teamster, $15; John and Joanna Barton, $200; Mary Ann Forsythe and Diane Drechnowicz, $50; Anonymous through the Berrien Community Foundation, $1,000; Nancy Braun, $100; Donna Metz, $100; Christopher Thomas and Kristin Hosbein, $500; Anonymous, $5,000; Margaret Schmieding, $150; Charles Jager, $50.

Police lose Ionia County drunken driving case at Michigan's top court

DETROIT (AP) — A five-year dispute over a speed limit on a western Michigan road ended Wednesday when the state's highest court sided with a man who can't be prosecuted for drunken driving.

The Supreme Court, which heard arguments in November, said in a two-sentence order that it will let an appeals court decision stand in favor of Anthony Owen.

Owen was stopped and accused of drunken driving in Saranac in Ionia County in 2015. A sheriff's deputy said the stop was justified because Owen's vehicle was traveling at 43 mph in a 25 mph zone.

Owen pleaded guilty to impaired driving but was allowed to fight the case in higher courts.

The appeals court in 2019 threw out the evidence when Owen's attorney successfully argued that the speed limit actually was 55 mph by default because there was no sign stating the speed limit on Parsonage Road.

When the Supreme Court agreed to hear arguments, it asked if the officer simply "made an objectively reasonable mistake of law."

That's how three of the seven justices viewed the case Wednesday, but Brian Zahra, Stephen Markman and David Viviano were in the minority.

A statewide group of prosecutors had urged the Supreme Court to provide clarity for disputes over the Fourth Amendment, which covers searches and seizures.

2020 Essays: HP staff reflects on a strange year

2020 through a lens

By ANDY STEINKE
HP Features Editor

As the end of December approaches, many people reflect on their year. They'll take a look back at everything they've done, and start looking forward to everything they'll do in the new year.

STEINKE

My job allows me to be more reflective than most – I've spent the last nine months sharing my thoughts on 2020 with you – but I've also spent a lot of time this year reliving my youth.

Since I've had more time than usual at home, I've been grabbing old photo albums from my mom's house and digitizing some of my favorite pictures. I've been using them in a Throwback Thursday series on my personal blog so others can enjoy them, too.

They're photos of everyday life at home, sporting events, pets, friends, fairs, holidays, vacations, summer fun and family members come and gone.

Memories fade as they're replaced by new experiences, but photos freeze time forever. They show us exactly how life was.

As much as I'd like to forget 2020, I've been documenting it with my camera, too, so I can remember everything that's happened: the projects, the home schooling, the holidays at home, the face masks, the rare social events and the scenes of everyday life.

It'll likely be the most defining year of my life – of most of our lives – so I've been chronicling it. When future generations ask about 2020, I can show them exactly what life was like and how we got through it.

Past generations have lived through wars, pandemics, civil unrest, natural disasters and economic collapses, and they've come out stronger on the other side. We can, too.

While it's important we remember the lessons we've learned this year – some the hard way – we have to remember there was good in 2020, too.

Just take a look through the photos on your phone. What do you see? Are they pictures of pain, of grief, of loneliness?

Probably not. More than likely, they're photos of your cat. They're shots of smiling children. They're closeups of your favorite meals. They're screenshots of Zoom meetings with family and friends.

We wouldn't save space on our hard drives for photos that bring us down. So why should we save space in our internal memories for the worries and woes of 2020?

Let's all take a moment to remember everything that's happened in 2020 – the good and the bad. But then, let's clear the memory card, because a new year is nearly upon us.

The cardboard wedding

By JULIE SWIDWA
HP Staff Writer

Dan and Amy Stuglik were forced to drastically downsize their wedding plans in 2020, but still found a resourceful way to fill up the church, a story that made its way around the world.

When I reflect on the special events that have fallen victim to the COVID-19 pandemic, it would be easy to become melancholy or, let's be honest, downright depressed.

But then I think of two of my favorite people, and how they made lemonade from lemons. Their shining example will stay with me for the rest of my life, in good times and bad.

SWIDWA

A wedding is a big day, especially for a bride.

Possibly the biggest day of her life.

My son and his bride-to-be, now his wife, spent a year planning their perfect day, which was set for April 4, 2020.

The venue was chosen and reserved. The reception caterer was hired, and deposit paid. The 160 guests had been invited.

Then COVID-19 hit, and with it restrictions on gatherings.

As their big day approached, things began to implode.

First, the guest list was limited to 50.

Then, further restrictions set the number of people allowed to gather at 10. Then, the stay-at-home order hit, with the exception of outings that were "essential."

Needless to say, for the bride and groom's parents, this outing was essential.

So the marriage ceremony would include half of the wedding party, the minister, and parents. That's it.

The large, catered reception, eventually canceled entirely, was re-scheduled to October, and dinner after the marriage ceremony would be a home-cooked meal at the newly married couple's house. I got to know the bride's parents better while washing and drying dishes.

As the big day approached, I was so sad for this loving couple, who had already conquered and navigated through seemingly insurmountable obstacles to arrive at their destination.

My son was sad for his sweet bride-to-be. She told him "If you're sad, you're going to make me more sad."

I was sad.

They told me, "You're more upset about this than we are." Their gentle way of telling me, "Suck it up, mom."

But my son watched his bride-to-be fight back tears as the big day approached. He could not stand the thought of his lovely bride taking a lonely walk down the aisle of an empty church.

So he approached Menasha Packaging Co. in Coloma, and asked if they could sell him enough cardboard to make 100 "guests" to fill the church pews.

Menasha went above and beyond. They brought in a designer and crew who would fashion, and donate, the 100 guests in a day. My son envisioned some cardboard ovals.

But the cardboard guests who filled the church were men, women, girls and boys. My sisters were "there." My daughter-in-law's grandmother was "there." The couple's friends were "there."

The ceremony was beautiful beyond compare. As I watched these two young people, a police officer and a school teacher, look into each other's eyes and exchange vows, I knew without a doubt, these two will survive anything, and will create a great life together.

Their story was picked up by local media, then The Associated Press, and eventually made its way across the country and internationally. Jimmy Fallon made fun of the wedding seen around the world during his "Tonight Show" monologue.

"If anyone objects to this union, raise your hand," Fallon said, waving a cardboard hand in the air.

Thank you Dan and Amy, for your strength, resilience, a bit of levity, and a promise that the future of our family, and our world, are in good hands.

Married in masks

By BEN SANDERS
HP Sports Editor

For much of my life I assumed I'd have a pretty typical wedding – scores of family and friends attending a giant ceremony, followed by copious amounts of food, drinking and dancing.

As I got older, I started to lean toward something less extravagant – but I still figured there'd be more than seven people there. COVID-19 changed that.

SANDERS

My wife, Jess, and I were married on Oct. 10 in Michigan State University's Horticulture Gardens. Joining us were four close friends, including one who performed the ceremony, and a photographer. A fifth friend was invited, but canceled at the last minute due to a COVID outbreak at her workplace – a reminder of why we were having such an unusual wedding in the first place.

We got engaged on April 9 of this year, and quickly realized there were no good answers as to when and how to officially tie the knot. At first it seemed logical to wait for a safer time. But what if one of us caught the coronavirus and had to be hospitalized? Or just got hit by a bus? We wanted to get married sooner rather than later, just in case.

HP Sports Editor Ben Sanders and Jess McLeod were married on Oct. 10 in Michigan State University's Horticulture Gardens.

We considered a quick courthouse ceremony, but they were temporarily unavailable due to the pandemic. We could get our marriage license online, but we'd have to find our own officiant and witnesses.

Friends filled those roles, and that was the extent of the guest list. We wanted to have our parents there, and although mine are here, Jess's live in North Carolina and it wasn't safe for them to travel up here. Inviting one pair but not the other didn't feel right, so ultimately our folks watched us say our vows over Zoom.

The costs associated with a typical wedding – booking a venue, hiring caterers and a DJ, getting a multi-tiered wedding cake – are enormous, and don't scale down well.

So in lieu of those things, we opted for a "guerilla wedding." We simply found a spot in MSU's gardens we liked and hoped it would be empty when we showed up. (Thankfully it was.)

The ceremony was casual, with guests wearing sandals and hiking boots, and the officiant in a tie-dye lab coat. Jess wore a simple wine-colored calf-length dress, and I didn't even wear a tie. And of course, masks were the must-have accessory for all.

For the even-smaller reception, my best friend and his girlfriend cooked us dinner at their Airbnb, which we ate at opposite ends of the backyard picnic table. And for dessert, well, nothing says mini-wedding like cupcakes.

Despite the many ways COVID denied us the wedding we'd imagined, Jess and I still had one of the best days of our lives. We're very happy to have found each other and to be married, and we don't need a wedding with all the frills to appreciate that.

We're planning to have a proper reception at a safer time, because the hardest part of our pandemic wedding was not being able to share it with loved ones. Reasons to celebrate aren't easy to find in 2020, and we'd love to be able to give one to the people we care about. But like so many things this year, that will have to wait.

My blessings in Ohio

By ALEXANDRA NEWMAN
HP Staff Writer

Many a Michigander spends most of their time avoiding, or at least trash talking, Ohio.

NEWMAN

But this year, it's been the only place I've wanted to be.

When I moved to Michigan in 2017, it was worth being just 4.5 hours away from my family – until the coronavirus pandemic.

I would visit about four times a year; sometimes for holidays, sometimes for graduations or baby showers, but always to give my grandma and grandpa hugs.

I was terrified when it started to be known that COVID-19 was disproportionately affecting older people. What if this virus took the most important people from me and I can't be there?

This story became so common. I thought it was just a matter of time before someone killed my grandparents with their carelessness.

Grandma and Grandpa (my dad's parents, Priscilla and Stoney) were my free child care for the first three years of my life, and I lived just 20 minutes away from them until I went to college.

Their little farmhouse near an airport west of Dayton is a place I could probably find if I lost my memory. Their phone number is the first one I memorized and always one of the first ones I call after good news.

My grandpa, 92, ended up in the hospital in August for something non-COVID related, but I thought we were losing him. I was convinced. I called and talked to him for a few minutes and he sounded so frail. I warned my sisters to get in calls too, before it was too late.

Grandpa was back home later that week, but I knew I needed to do whatever it took to visit.

I started planning when would work to quarantine for two weeks and get tested for COVID. I started coordinating with my mom, and it fell into place in October.

I was able to safely spend Grandma's 80th birthday with her and Grandpa.

We didn't do much but eat cake and watch "Jeopardy," but I am so thankful that in the midst of so much sadness and fear, I got to spend time with my two favorite people.

There was still some risk, but it feels like so little when you can say you did absolutely everything you could to keep each other safe.

Grandpa was sad I couldn't spend the night, so I owe him a sleepover party once we're all vaccinated.

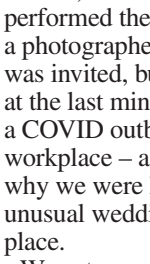
My heart aches for those who lost their grandparents this year. I count my blessings in Ohio every single day.

The band played on

By TONY WITTKOWSKI
HP Staff Writer

At the beginning of this year, I wanted to do something unique.

Instead of coming up with a series of resolutions in an effort to better myself for 2020 alone, I compiled a checklist of items I wanted to attempt over the next decade.


WITTKOWSKI

This included everything from spending a week in a non-English speaking country to getting a local restaurant to name a menu item after me.

However, I scrapped the list by April. I instead focused on one item in particular – listen to a new album each month. Music has been my saving grace and an escape through the longer days and even shorter weekends this year. It began as a way to expand my vinyl collection, but turned into a greater appreciation.

I discovered new artists (shout out to Spotify's recommendation algorithm) and amazing songs that not only enlightened but distracted me from the onslaught of bad news that consistently flooded social media.

My favorite song of 2020 was "Wildfires" by Sault – a British band that dabbles in soul and blues.

My favorite album released this year was RTJ4, a great addition to Run The Jewels' discography. Killer Mike and El-P released their fourth studio album in June as tensions continued to heat up across the country with a more futuristic beat with bangers like "Ooh La La" and "JU$T," the latter of which featured Zack de la Rocha from Rage Against the Machine.

The album was bittersweet for me. While I was able to enjoy it, the tour was canceled after I bought tickets to see the rap duo perform in July. Fingers crossed the tour isn't canceled again, as I hope to see them live in 2021.

The pandemic gave me a chance to discover artists I had never heard of before.

I've played The Free Nationals self-titled LP on repeat this summer, after learning they were the main band to play for Anderson Paak on his "Malibu" album. Kevin Abstract's "American Boyfriend" proved to be a unique blend between Frank Ocean and Tyler the Creator.

The Olympians' self-titled album was a blend of soul instrumentals that flies by on repeat listens. It came out in 2016 and I'm surprised it hasn't received more notoriety. Also arriving this year was the surprising culmination of Kid Cudi's Man on the Moon trilogy.

Perhaps the best thing to happen to me this year – at least from a musical perspective – was being introduced to the podcast known as "Dissect." I devoured every episode, as the pod's host, Cole Cuchna, uses his degree in music composition to analyze contemporary albums.

He's covered hit albums by Kendrick Lamar, Kanye West, Frank Ocean, Lauryn Hill, Tyler the Creator, Beyonce and Childish Gambino, breaking each album into separate seasons. From the music sampled in each song to the hidden meanings behind lyrics, the podcast has been another escape from this garbage of a year.

While I don't have any expectations for 2021, I intend to double my efforts musically. If you, loyal reader, have made it this far in the ramblings of a late-20-something, I ask you to send me your album recommendations. They can be new releases or classics that mean the world to you. I've recently become obsessed with Stevie Wonder and James Brown, so any and all suggestions are welcomed.

Email me your recommendations – along with a brief reason – at twittkowski@TheHP.com, or message me some of your favorite songs on Twitter at @TonyWittkowski.

Too quiet to work

By DAVE BROWN
HP Managing Editor

An empty newsroom is a lonely place.

A newsroom is a unique environment. With daily, and even hourly deadlines, the pace can be hectic.

With news breaking constantly and issues evolving rapidly, plans and schedules always have to be flexible.

BROWN

And because so much of what we deal with involves conflict – political battles, zoning disputes, criminal charges, pandemic responses, personal tragedies – journalists (skeptics by nature) develop defense mechanisms to help them observe and analyze the conflicts without becoming emotionally weighed down by them.

One of those defense mechanisms is newsroom banter. The verbal back and forth, often humorous and sarcastic, helps relieve the stress. It also makes us better at our jobs. It reminds us to be skeptical of both sides of a dispute when they try to manipulate facts to bolster their argument, and it often leads to suggestions for story angles and sources that make our reporting stronger.

Since last spring, The HP newsroom has been a quiet place. All the reporters are working remotely, as are most of the page designers. I still go into the office every workday, but for a good portion of the day I'm the only one in the newsroom.

The silence is deafening.

I miss the jokes.

I miss the cries of frustration when sources (especially politicians) won't return phone calls.

I miss the shouts of excitement when phone call is returned, when a scoop is obtained, when someone brings in doughnuts to share. (In addition to the excitement about doughnuts, I also miss the doughnuts.)

We can do our jobs working from home, but we can't do them as easily. I'm proud of my staff members for the ways they have adapted and stepped up this year, but I miss seeing them every day.

The newsroom isn't really a newsroom without them.

OBITUARIES

James Brown

Oct. 21, 1967 – Dec. 20, 2020

James (Jim) Donald Brown, 53, of Deer Park, Ill., passed away Sunday, Dec. 20, 2020, in an accident.

He was born on Oct. 21, 1967, in Livonia, Mich., to Karen and Don Brown, currently of St. Joseph.

He married Nancy (Nye), his sweetheart from Lakeshore High School in June, 1993. Together they had two amazing sons: Ethan (20) and Adam (17).

After graduating from Michigan State University, Jim and Nancy made a life for themselves in Deer Park. Jim worked for Centene Corporation as a director of sales operations. He remained a staunch Spartan fan for his whole life, attending football and basketball games whenever possible. His skill with home improvement projects was appreciated by the whole family. He excelled in painting, tile work, and outdoor yard work. Another hobby was collecting and driving classic cars. Jim was known for his great sense of humor. He always kept family members laughing.

Jim will be missed by family and friends. He is survived by his loving wife of 27 years, Nancy; and his sons: Ethan and Adam. He will be missed by his parents: Don and Karen Brown; his brother, Mike Brown; nephews: Caiden and Madden; his in-laws: John and Sandra Nye; sister-in-law, Noreen (Nye) Robinson; brother-in-law, Paul Robinson; nieces: Corinne and Juliana; brothers-in-law: Steve Nye and Ryan Lynch; and nephew, Bodi, will miss Jim as well, along with many other aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends.

Due to pandemic restrictions, the family will hold a celebration of life in the spring or summer.

Oskar Oelke

March 12, 1939 – Dec. 23, 2020

Oskar Oelke, 81, of Stevensville passed away Wednesday, Dec. 23, 2020, at Lakeland Medical Center, St. Joseph.

The son of Albert and Leokadia (Senft), he was born the youngest of three siblings on March 12, 1939, in Klementynów, Poland.

Oskar spent his early life in Bielefeld, Germany, immigrating to the United States in 1956. He attended trade school at Lake Michigan College, earning a certificate in tool and die. He spent 40 years in the trade, a majority of that time at Precision Mold & Engineering.

Oskar enjoyed spending time with other local German folks, and as a young man played soccer for the Kicker's Club. He met his wife Anita at the DANK in 1965, where over the years they both enjoyed listening to live German music at dances and other social events. He was a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Stevensville, where he often volunteered as an usher. His joys in life revolved around his family and children, and was lovingly referred to as Opa by all four grandchildren. One of his passions in life was traveling with his wife and kids, especially to Canada and Germany to spend time with siblings and relatives. Oskar had an overall jovial spirit, and nothing made him happier than being surrounded by friends and family, telling a good story, making people laugh, listening to music, and sharing good food and drink together.

Oskar is survived by his wife, Anita; his children: Doris (Paul) Leal of Saginaw, Gerald (Sarah) Oelke of St. Peters, Mo.; four grandchildren: Maxwell and Alec Leal, Melissa and George Oelke; and several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; and siblings: Emma Pufal, Edmund and Herman Oelke.

A celebration of life service will be at noon Saturday, Jan. 2, 2021, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 2673 W. John Beers Road, Stevensville, with the Rev. Jesse Knox officiating. Friends may visit with the family beginning at 11 a.m. Saturday at the church.

Memorial donations in Oskar's name may be made to St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

Those wishing to sign Oskar's Memory Book online may do so at www.starks-menchinger.com.

Helen Irene Drake

March 2, 1918 – Dec. 26, 2020

Helen Irene Drake was born on March 2, 1918, in Alexander Manitoba, Canada, the daughter of George and Mary (Twa) Lovegrove.

Irene, as everyone knew her, passed away Saturday, Dec. 26, 2020, at The Timbers of Cass County, Dowagiac. She had 102 exceptional years and lived a rich family-filled life. Our family has lost a wonderful mother and grandmother. She was strong-willed, feisty and independent. Hers was a life of love – she loved life. She enjoyed young people and her home at Van Auken Lake. Her passing saddens our family and she will be sorely missed.

She was the consummate homemaker with excellent sewing, knitting, cooking, and house-keeping skills. She had many long-standing friendships with people she met at various groups – "Kitchen Band," Bunco Club, Van Auken Pleasure Club, Red Hat Club and Senior Lunch/Bingo.

On July 14, 1938, Helen Irene Lovegrove and Curtis William Drake were united in marriage and for the next 79 years, they were inseparable. They met in Chicago at a church social. Irene had moved from Canada to Chicago to help her aunt Ethel who had arthritis. Irene and Curt moved to Van Auken Lake to farm (Cherry Hill Fruit Farm) and raise their family, which consists of a daughter, Jean (Ronald) Johnson of Hartford; a son, Dale Drake of Hartford; four grandchildren: Roderick (Kathy) Johnson, Daniel (Melissa) Messer, Darcelle (Kenneth) Austin, and Danielle (Michael) Aschenbrener; seven great-grandchildren: Gabriel and Gwen Johnson, Victoria and Ayden Austin, Maxwell and Valentina Aschenbrener and Theodore Messer; and a sister, Ethel Mollberg.

Irene was preceded in passing by her husband, Curtis; her parents; four brothers: Howard Lovegrove, Clarence Lovegrove, Oliver Lovegrove and Arthur Lovegrove; and three sisters: Eleanor Sedden, Lorna Irving and Margaret Glintz.

As to Irene's wishes, cremation has taken place. There will be a graveside memorial celebration of her life at 2 p.m., on Saturday, Jan. 2, 2021, at Thomas Cemetery in Bangor Township. Pastor Ben Williamson will officiate.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Hartford Bible Church. Those wishing to leave memorial condolences for the family may do so on our website at www.calvin-leonardfh.com.

Ronda Walker

Aug. 17, 1953 – Dec. 28, 2020

Ronda Kay Walker, 67, a resident of rural Grantsburg, Ill., and a native of Benton Harbor passed away at 11:38 a.m., Monday, Dec. 28, 2020, at her home.

Ronda was a homemaker and artisan. She was an ordained pastor through Principles For Life Ministries in Ledbetter, Ky.

Ronda is survived by her father, Ronald Beilman of Berrien Center; her husband, Steve Walker of Vienna, Ill.; her children: Kara Youngblood of Sodus, Jake Griffin of Paducah, Ky., and Travis Walker of Metropolis, Ill.; seven grandchildren; her siblings: Valerie Critzer of Eau Claire, Frank Beilman of Niles, and Amy (Jon) Petrasek of Lawrence, Mich.

Ronda was preceded in death by her mother, Shirley Grant Beilman; an infant granddaughter, Elaina Walker; and a sister, Joan Beilman.

A memorial celebration of Ronda's life will be from noon-3 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 2, 2021, at her home.

Memorials may be made to Eagle House Ministries, 3590 State Route 37 North, Buncombe, IL 62912.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Bailey Funeral Home in Vienna.

Ida Rogers

Jan. 19, 1932 – Dec. 30, 2020

Ida M. "Tootie" Rogers passed away Wednesday, Dec. 30, at Graceway at Countryside Assisted Living & Nursing Home, South Haven, where she had been a resident for over nine years.

She was born in Watervliet on Jan. 19, 1932, to Earl and Lula Blanshan. She graduated from Watervliet High School in 1950.

Tootie married Harley Rogers in 1951, who she met while working at the Beverly Lumber Company. She worked as assistant librarian at Watervliet High School for several years, and as a USPS mail carrier in Watervliet for 17 ½ years before retiring in 1994.

Surviving is her daughter, Debbie (Mel) Glover; grandson, Chad Brinks; great-granddaughter, Andrea Brinks; step great-grandsons: Donald Holmes and Trevor Blamer.

Tootie was preceded in death by her husband, Harley; her son, Larry; and significant others: Erdean Kelly and Ralph Ruder. Also preceding her in death were brothers and sisters: Earl Blanshan, Agnes Kabel, Dora Moser, Nona Kabel and Harold Blanshan.

Tootie and Erdean enjoyed going up to Sault Ste. Marie to watch the ships go through the locks. They also had many favorite restaurants in the area.

In lieu of flowers memorials may be made to North Berrien Senior Center in Coloma, or to the charity of your choice.

The family has entrusted Hutchins Funeral Home in Watervliet with arrangements. A private burial will take place in Watervliet Cemetery. No public memorial service will be held. Those wishing to leave a memorial condolence may do so at hutchinsfuneral.com.

Elizabeth Ives

July 7, 1928 – Dec. 29, 2020

Elizabeth "Bette" C. Ives, 92, of Stevensville passed away Tuesday, Dec. 29, 2020, at her home.

A private graveside service will be held. Burial will take place at Riverview Cemetery in St. Joseph. Memorial contributions may be made to Caring Circle of Lakeland, 4025 Health Park Lane, St. Joseph, or Berrien County Cancer Service, 3900 Hollywood Road, St. Joseph. Those wishing to leave an online condolence may do so at www.starks-menchinger.com. Arrangements have been entrusted to Starks & Menchinger Chapel & Cremation Services.

Bette was born on July 7, 1928, to Peter and Katherine (Coughlin) Rybarczyk in St. Joseph. She graduated from St. Joseph Catholic School as valedictorian of her class.

On Sept. 27, 1947, Bette married the love of her life, Roy Ives, at St. Joseph Catholic Church, where they were lifelong members. Bette volunteered much of her time as a founding member of the Marion Guild, singing in the choir at church and cooking for funeral luncheons. Bette was an avid sports fan, especially for the Notre Dame Fighting Irish. Her most treasured time was spent with her family.

Bette is survived by her children: Cathleen (Fred) Fenrick of St. Joseph, Stephen (Annelise) Ives of Rockford, Ill., Susan (Chuck) Fox of Stevensville, Jeffrey Ives of Austell, Ga., and Christopher Ives of Benton Harbor; 18 grandchildren; 33 great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren.

Bette was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Roy Ives; and daughter, Deborah Ives.

John Souers

June 29, 1942 – Dec. 28, 2020

John Larry Souers, 78, of Eau Claire died Monday, Dec. 28, 2020, at his home.

Larry was born June 29, 1942, in St. Joseph to Stanley and Frieda (Adams) Souers. He worked in construction for Souers Construction, then became an independent contractor.

He loved riding his Harley, mushroom hunting, going to deer camp with his sons and friends, and fishing at the Souers Lake. He loved to travel to South Dakota to the Black Hills and Sturgis Rally – he called Deadwood, South Dakota, his second home. There was nothing he couldn't do. He had also been a member of the Eau Claire Lions Club and the Benton Harbor Moose Lodge.

Larry loved his family. His face lit the world when his grand- and great-grandkids showed up. He is survived by his wife, Vally (Trowbridge) Souers; three sons: John, Larry, and Roger Souers; daughter, Beth (David) Carey; brother, Ron Stokes; three brothers-in-law: Tim, Allan, and Doug Trowbridge; three sisters: Missy Stanford Healey (David), Becky Lynch, and Karen Stanford; seven grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents; and his brother, David Souers.

A celebration will be at a later date. Visit the family and send condolence cards to 2390 Park Road, Eau Claire, MI 49111. Messages and memories may be shared online at www.bowermanfuneral.com. Bowerman Funeral Home, Eau Claire, is assisting the family.

Death notices

Joanne B. Averill, 89, of St. Joseph died Dec. 26, 2020, at her home. Starks & Menchinger Chapel. St. Joseph, 556-9450.

Ursula Breitkreuz, 99, of Stevensville died Dec. 27, 2020. Starks & Menchinger Chapel, St. Joseph, 556-9450.

James Brown, 53, of Deer Park, Ill., died Dec. 20, 2020. Wood River Chapel, Hailey, Idaho.

William Deetjen, 75, of Sawyer died Dec. 28, 2020. Pike Funeral Home, Boyd Chapel, Bridgman, 465-3239.

Helen Drake, 102, of Dowagiac died Dec. 26, 2020. Calvin-Leonard Funeral Home, Hartford, 621-4101.

Phillip Fisk, 73, of Niles died Dec. 30, 2020, at Lakeland Medical Center, St. Joseph. Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Niles, 683-1155.

Robert Hoese, 88, of Niles died Dec. 29, 2020 at Hanson Hospice Center, Stevensville. Brown Funeral Home, Niles, 683-1155.

Arvell Damone Hudson, 49, of Benton Harbor died Dec. 26, 2020. Brown Funeral Home and Cremation Services, Niles, 683-1155.

Elizabeth Ives, 92, of Stevensville died Dec. 29, 2020. Starks & Menchinger Chapel, St. Joseph, 556-9450.

Gerald Pullins Sr., 85, of Stevensville died Dec. 28, 2020. Starks & Menchinger Chapel, St. Joseph, 556-9450.

Ida M. Rogers, 88, of Watervliet died Dec. 30, 2020. Hutchins Funeral Home, Watervliet, 463-3811.

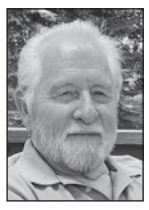
John Souers, 78, of Eau Claire died Dec. 28, 2020. Bowerman Funeral Home, Eau Claire, 461-4241.

Ronda Walker, 67, of Grantsburg, Ill.., formerly of Benton Harbor died Dec. 28, 2020. Bailey Funeral Home, Vienna, Ill.

Patsy M. Whisenant, 75, of Niles died Sunday Dec. 27, 2020, at her home. Halbritter-Wickens Funeral Home, Niles, 683-3000.

Gerald Pullins Sr.

July 23, 1935 – Dec. 28, 2020



Gerald "Jerry" D. Pullins Sr., 85, of Stevensville passed away Monday, Dec. 28, 2020, at Lakeland Medical Center, St. Joseph.

A private family graveside service will take place at a later date. Interment will be at Lincoln Township Cemetery. Memorial contributions will take place at Stevensville American Legion Post 568, 3093 Johnson Road, Stevensville. Those wishing to leave an online condolence may do so at www.starks-menchinger.com. Arrangements have been entrusted to Starks & Menchinger Chapel & Cremation Services.

Jerry was born on July 23, 1935, to Leonard and Lucille (Huff) Pullins in Dowagiac. He graduated from Benton Harbor High School and then proudly served his country in the U.S. Air Force before he was honorably discharged.

On June 5, 1957, Jerry married the love of his life Josefine Lenhart in Germany.

Jerry worked as a manager for National Foods Grocery Store for over 30 years until the stores closed. He then worked as an inspector for Gast Manufacturing for over 15 years before he retired. Jerry was a member of the Stevensville American Legion Post 568 and had a passion for hunting and fishing. Jerry was a loving father, grandfather and great-grandfather, and he loved to spend his time with his family.

Jerry is survived by his children: Rose (Jack) Imbordino of Baroda, Gerald (Denise) Pullins Jr., of Stevensville, and Scott (Michelle) Pullins of Stevensville; grandchildren: Matthew, Misty, Amanda, Jason, Carly, and Maureen (Brad); great-grandchildren: Evie Jo, Emory and Aubrey; and sister-in-law, Judy Pullins.

Jerry was preceded in death by his parents: Leonard and Lucille Pullins; wife, Josefine Pullins; and brother, Kenneth Pullins.

Ursula Breitkreuz

Feb. 27, 1921 – Dec. 27, 2020

Ursula Breitkreuz, 99, of Stevensville passed away peacefully Dec. 27, 2020, at Gilead Elder Care in St. Joseph.

The family will receive guests from 9:30 a.m. until time of celebration of life service at 10:30 a.m., Saturday, Jan, 2, 2021, at Napier Parkview Baptist Church, 245 W. Napier Ave., Benton Harbor. Burial to follow at Riverview Cemetery, St. Joseph.

Memorial contributions in Ursula's name may be given to the Napier Parkview Baptist Church. Those wishing to leave an online condolence for the family may do so at www.starks-menchinger.com.

Ursula was born on Feb. 27, 1921, in Bitterfeld, Germany, to August and Helene Marie (Moring) Schneider.

On July 2, 1941, in Marienwerder, Germany, she married Ewert Breitkreuz. In 1952, the couple immigrated to the United States.

Ursula was a woman of faith and knew her Saviour, Jesus Christ, intimately. Church was very important to her from a young age and she was active in the choir and enjoyed doing crafts for the children's ministry for many years. She loved gardening and flowers which she planted every year and tended. Ursula also loved to sing and God had gifted her with a beautiful voice. In her younger days she sang solos and at events. She also loved crocheting, knitting, needlepoint and sewing. She used her skills to make afghans for the entire family and others. Most of all, she was devoted to her God and her family all her life.

Ursula will be missed by her daughters: Gisela (Robert) Kowaleski, Marianne (Thomas) Daniels, and Susanne Breitkreuz; her grandchildren: Annette (Ryan) Harvey, Rachael (Keith) Swearingen, and Rebecca (Kyle) Howard; her great-grandchildren: George, Andrew, and Sarah Harvey, Luke and Ethan Swearingen, and Esther and Lydia Howard.

She is preceded in death by her husband, Ewert Breitkreuz; three sisters; one brother; and her parents.

See more obituaries on Page A6

Getting it straight

The Herald-Palladium makes every effort to ensure accuracy in its stories.

If you think there is an error, please contact the editor of the page on which it occurred. If you are unsure of whom to contact, call Local News Editor Dale Brewer at 429-3797.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

1995 – 25 years ago

Debbie Knuth majored in modern dance at Western Michigan University and began teaching in 1983 at the Pat Bryant School of Dance. When the former owner retired in 1989, she took over the studio and renamed it Sawyer Dance Troupe and Dance Academy. She enjoys teaching teen students the jazz they see Janet Jackson or Paula Abdul doing on music videos. Her other students are enjoying a renaissance of tap dancing.

1985 – 35 years ago

The junior varsity cheerleading squads of Lake Michigan Catholic and Lakeshore high schools this morning were competing in the final round in a national cheerleading contest in Nashville, according to John Carr, principal at Lake Michigan Catholic High School. Carr said both JV squads qualified for the finals during preliminary competition over the weekend.The varsity cheerleading squads of both high schools also were in the national competition but did not qualify for the finals.

1970 – 50 years ago

Bridgman rose from the dead to shock Lake Michigan Catholic 55-52 in a Red Arrow thriller Friday night in the Laker gym. The Bees were down by 14 points entering the final quarter, but guard Bob Ackerman worked a miracle, which gave Bridgman sole possession of the league lead. Ackerman, who is the leading scorer in Southwest Michigan returning from last season, went on a 15-point scoring spree in the fourth period as the Bees' savior.

TODAY IN HISTORY

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Today is Thursday, Dec. 31, the 366th and final day of 2020.

Highlight in history:

On Dec. 31, 2019, the health commission in the central Chinese city of Wuhan announced that experts were investigating an outbreak of respiratory illness and that most of the victims had visited a seafood market in the city; the statement said 27 people had become ill with a strain of viral pneumonia and that seven were in serious condition.

On this date:

In 1857, Britain's Queen Victoria decided to make Ottawa the capital of Canada.

In 1879, Thomas Edison first publicly demonstrated his electric incandescent light by illuminating some 40 bulbs at his laboratory in Menlo Park, New Jersey.

In 1904, New York's Times Square saw its first New Year's Eve celebration, with an estimated 200,000 people in attendance.

In 1951, the Marshall Plan expired after distributing more than $12 billion in foreign aid.

In 1972, Major League baseball player Roberto Clemente, 38, was killed when a plane he chartered and was traveling on to bring relief supplies to earthquake-devastated Nicaragua crashed shortly after takeoff from Puerto Rico.

In 1974, private U.S. citizens were allowed to buy and own gold for the first time in more than 40 years.

In 1999, Russian President Boris Yeltsin announced his resignation (he was succeeded by Vladimir Putin).

5-Day Forecast for St. Joseph

Today	Tonight	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Rain Likely	Rain & Snow Likely	Mostly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy
33°	25°	35° / 27°	39° / 29°	38° / 28°	40° / 32°

Local Outlook

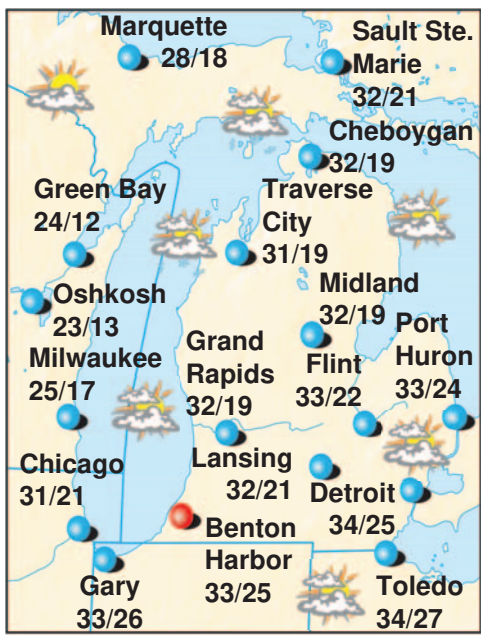
Today we will see mostly cloudy skies with a high temperature of 33°, humidity of 68%. West southwest wind 2 to 7 mph. Expect mostly cloudy skies tonight with an overnight low of 25°. East southeast wind 2 to 10 mph. The wind chill for tonight could reach 17°.

Sun and Moon

Sunrise	8:14 a.m.
Sunset	5:24 p.m.
Moonrise	6:56 p.m.
Moonset	9:38 a.m.

Last	New	First	Full
1/6	1/13	1/20	1/28

Regional Map



Local Almanac

Benton Harbor Yesterday

Temperature

High	38°
Low	26°
Normal High	32°
Normal Low	18°
Record High	56° in 2002
Record Low	-1° in 1998

Precipitation

Yesterday	0.24"
Month to date	1.91"
Normal for month	2.11"
Year to date	33.94"
Normal Year to date	37.44"

Air Quality

Yesterday	52
Main Offender	Particles

The higher the number, the greater the need for people with respiratory problems to reduce outside activity.

0-50	Good
51-100	Moderate
101-150	Sensitive
151-200	Unhealthy

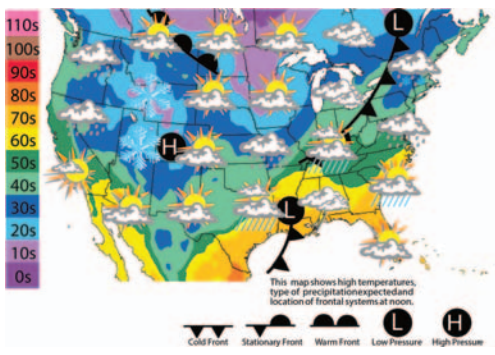
Weather Trivia

Is there salt in the stratosphere?

Answer: Yes. The most probable cause is meteors.

National Weather Map

Forecast map for Dec. 31, 2020



For latest weather updates: **www.UpdatedWx.com/HP**

Lake Michigan

Today, WNW wind 5 to 8 kt. Mostly cloudy. Waves 1 to 3 ft. Water temperature 36 degrees. Tonight, Variable winds less than 5 kt. Mostly cloudy. Waves 1 ft or less.

Michigan Forecast

Upper Peninsula

Today, skies will be mostly cloudy with scattered snow showers, highs in the 20s and 30s. West southwest wind 8 to 11 mph. Expect mostly cloudy skies Friday with scattered snow, highs in the 30s. East southeast wind 5 to 11 mph.

Lower Peninsula

Today, skies will be mostly cloudy with highs in the 30s. West southwest wind 2 to 7 mph. Expect cloudy skies Friday with widespread rain, highs in the 30s and 40s. East northeast wind 10 to 16 mph.

OBITUARIES

William Deetjen

Jan. 6, 1945 – Dec. 28, 2020

William Charles Deetjen, 75, of Sawyer passed away Monday, Dec. 28, 2020, at his home.

Memorial services will be at 11 a.m., Saturday, Jan. 2, 2021, at Harbert Community Church, 6444 Harbert Road, Harbert, with the Rev. Jay S. Fast officiating. Friends may meet the family from 10 to 11 a.m. at the church prior to the service.

Memorial contributions may be given to Morning Star Children; checks can be made payable to "James 1:27" PO Box 197, Harbert MI 49115. Online condolences and a link to the memorial service livestream available at www.PikeFH.com.

Bill was born on Jan. 6, 1945, in Chicago, the son of the late Donald and Eleanor (Peters) Deetjen.

On Oct. 4, 1969, he married Patricia Throgmorton.

He owned and operated Deetjen Concrete. He was a member of Harbert Community Church. Bill enjoyed volunteering and giving his time and talents to help others. He had traveled with the church to Nairobi to work hand-in-hand with Morning Star Children.

Survivors include his wife of 51 years, Patricia; daughters: Christie (Brian) Berrier, and Kelly (Eraclio) Rodriguez; a son: Erik Deetjen; seven grandchildren; a brother: Douglas (Sue) Deetjen; and a sister, Kay Miller.

Bill was preceded in death by an infant daughter, Keri Deetjen; and three brothers: Donald, Philip and James Deetjen.

Arrangements entrusted to Pike Funeral and Cremation Services, the Boyd Chapel, 9191 Red Arrow Highway, Bridgman.

Arvell Hudson

Jan. 14, 1971 – Dec. 26, 2020

Arvell Damone Hudson, 49, of Benton Harbor passed away Saturday, Dec. 26, 2020, in Benton Harbor.

He was brought into this world on Jan. 14, 1971, in Benton Harbor to the late Willie E. and Lillie Mae (Washington) Hudson.

On Nov. 27, 2012, at a ceremony in Benton Harbor, Arvell married Tashia Vontaye Coburn.

He is survived by his wife, Tashia Hudson, of Benton Harbor; children: Courtney Hudson of Benton Harbor, Victoria Whitelow of Kalamazoo, Shayla Addison of Indianapolis, Jaquon Bennett of South Bend, Destiny Johnson of Benton Harbor, and Amari Johnson of Benton Harbor; five grandchildren; his siblings: Esterlean (Jetson Jr.) Alexander of Ft. Wayne, Freda (John) Evans of Benton Harbor, Pastor Kerwin (Joyce) Hudson of Coloma, Tyrone (Shirley) Hudson of Grand Rapids, Rodney (Penelope) Hudson of Benton Harbor, and LaVetta (Byron) White of Benton Harbor; as well as a host of aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and countless other family members.

A visitation will be from 10 a.m. to noon on Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2021, at Solid Rock Word Ministries at 3546 Evanston Street, Coloma, MI. Due to COVID-19 limitations, a private service will follow.

Memories of Arvell may be shared with his family at www.BrownFuneralHome-Niles.com. Arrangements have been entrusted to Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Niles.

COVID

From page A1

Van Buren/Cass

Both Van Buren and Cass counties are also seeing slowdowns in new COVID-19 cases.

Van Buren County recorded 15 new COVID-19 cases on Wednesday. Cass County added 62 new cases, but that is an outlier from recent trends.

No new deaths were recorded in either county on Wednesday.

The Herald-Palladium will resume reporting COVID-19 numbers in the Jan. 5 edition. To check the latest figures, visit www.bchdmi.org, https://vbcassdhd.org/covid-19, www.michigan.gov/coronavirus or www.spectrumhealthlakeland.org/covid19.

Contact: anewman@TheHP.com, 932-0357, Twitter: @HPANewman

'Gilligan's Island' star Dawn Wells dies, COVID-19 cited

By LYNN ELBER
AP Television Writer

AP photo

Dawn Wells, center, poses with fellow cast members of "Gilligan's Island," Bob Denver and Alan Hale Jr., in Los Angeles in 1965.

LOS ANGELES — Dawn Wells, who played the wholesome Mary Ann among a misfit band of shipwrecked castaways on the 1960s sitcom "Gilligan's Island," died Wednesday of causes related to COVID-19, her publicist said. She was 82.

Wells died peacefully at a residential facility in Los Angeles, publicist Harlan Boll said. "There is so much more to Dawn Wells" than the "Gilligan's Island" character that brought her fame, Boll said in a statement.

Besides TV, film and stage acting credits, her other real-life roles included teacher, motivational speaker and conservationist, Boll said.

Tina Louise, 86, who played Ginger the movie star, is the last surviving member of a cast that included Bob Denver as the title character; Alan Hale Jr. as the Skipper; Jim Backus and Natalie Schafer as wealthy passengers Thurston and Lovey Howell, and Russell Johnson, known as the Professor.

"I will always remember her kindness to me," Louise said in a statement. "We shared in creating a cultural landmark that has continued to bring comfort and smiles to people during this difficult time. I hope that people will remember her the way that I do – always with a smile on her face."

"Oh, this so sad. Bon voyage, Mary Ann," Jane Lynch posted on Twitter.

"Two and a Half Men" star Jon Cryer tweeted that it was a "thrill" to meet Wells when she visited the show, adding, "She could not have been more lovely and gracious."

Wells, a native of Reno, Nevada, represented her state in the 1959 Miss America pageant and quickly pivoted to an acting career. Her early TV roles were on shows including "77 Sunset Strip," "Maverick" and "Bonanza."

Then came "Gilligan's Island," a goofy, good-natured comedy that aired from 1964-67 that became an unlikely but indelible part of popular culture. Wells' comely but innocent Mary Ann complemented Louise's worldly Ginger, and both became innocuous '60s TV versions of sex symbols.

Wells' wardrobe included a gingham dress and shorts that modestly covered her belly button, with both costumes on display in Los Angeles at The Hollywood Museum.

TV movies spinoffs from the series followed, including 1978's "Rescue from Gilligan's Island," but Wells also moved on to other TV guest roles and films including the 2002 vacuum cleaner salesman comedy "Super Sucker" with Jeff Daniels. She starred on stage in dozens of plays, including "Chapter Two" and "The Odd Couple."

In 2013, she was honored by for her work with a Tennessee-based refuge, The Elephant Sanctuary.

To mark the 50th anniversary of "Gilligan's Island." Dawn wrote "A Guide To Life: What Would Mary Ann Do?" with observations about her character and the cultural changes that took place while she was stranded.

Two years ago, a friend launched a GoFundMe drive to help cover medical and other costs for Wells, although she protested she didn't need the assistance. She did end up acknowledging her need and accepted more than $180,000 in donations.

"Wow! I am amazed at the kindness and affection I have received" in response to the fundraising drive, Wells said in a social media post at the time. She said a "dear friend" undertook it after a frank conversation.

She recounted musing to him, "'Where did the time go? I don't know how this happened. I thought I was taking all the proper steps to ensure my golden years. Now, here I am, no family, no husband, no kids and no money.'"

Trebek's last new 'Jeopardy!' episodes airing with a tribute

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The final new "Jeopardy!" episodes hosted by Alex Trebek will air next week, with highlights that promise to be memorable.

The first of the five episodes will air Monday and start with Trebek's "powerful message about the season of giving," producer Sony Pictures Television said in a release Wednesday.

The final episode, on Friday, will conclude with a tribute to the longtime and beloved host. He died of pancreatic cancer on Nov. 8 at age 80.

Trebek, who had been candid about his condition, worked up until 10 days before he died, soldiering on despite debilitating treatments and the disease's toll.

It was unexpected that the episodes taped in late October would be his final ones, Sony said. Trebek had been fighting the disease for nearly two years.

Veteran "Jeopardy!" champion Ken Jennings will take over as guest host starting on Jan. 11. A permanent host has yet to be announced.

Calif. has nation's 2nd confirmed case of virus variant

By COLLEEN SLEVIN and CARLA K. JOHNSON
Associated Press

California on Wednesday announced the nation's second confirmed case of the new and apparently more contagious variant of the coronavirus, offering a strong indication that the infection is spreading more widely in the United States.

Gov. Gavin Newsom announced the infection found in Southern California during an online conversation with Dr. Anthony Fauci, head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

"I don't think Californians should think that this is odd. It's to be expected," Fauci said.

Newsom did not provide any details about the person who was infected.

The announcement came 24 hours after word of the first reported U.S. variant infection, which emerged in Colorado. That person was identified Wednesday as a Colorado National Guardsman who had been sent to help out at a nursing home struggling with an outbreak. Health officials said a second Guard member may have it too.

The cases triggered a host of questions about how the version circulating in England arrived in the U.S. and whether it is too late to stop it now, with top experts saying it is probably already spreading elsewhere in the United States.

"The virus is becoming more fit, and we're like a deer in the headlights," warned Dr. Eric Topol, head of Scripps Research Translational Institute. He noted that the U.S. does far less genetic sequencing of virus samples to discover variants than other developed nations, and thus was probably slow to detect this new mutation.

The two Guard members had been dispatched Dec. 23 to work at the Good Samaritan Society nursing home in the small town of Simla, in a mostly rural area about 90 miles outside Denver, said Dr. Rachel Herlihy, state epidemiologist. They were among six Guard members sent to the home.

hp SPORTS

Clemson, Alabama likely to play for title again

I would be very surprised if Alabama and Clemson don't collide for the college football national championship on Jan. 11.

The only question remaining is which team will win it all? Make it:

Clemson 35, Alabama 31

Why? Why not?

Al Arend
Big Al's Picks

I was very impressed with the way the Tigers, with quarterback Trevor Lawrence and their three starting linebackers back, manhandled previously undefeated Notre Dame.

I really don't expect the semifinals on Friday to be that close, especially the way Ohio State struggled against Northwestern in the Big Ten championship game – even though Clemson head coach Dabo Swinney gave the Buckeyes plenty of bulletin board material by picking them 11th in his final coaches poll vote.

As of this writing, Alabama was a 19 ½-point favorite over Notre Dame, while Clemson was favored by 7 ½ over Ohio State.

The four teams left have combined for 18 of the 28 total College Football Playoff bids. Alabama and Clemson have each appeared six times in seven seasons.

This is only Notre Dame's second appearance – the Irish were routed by Clemson two seasons ago. Michigan State made it once after the 2015 season, only to get thumped by Alabama. Ohio State has now made it four times, winning the first final four after the 2014 season.

Past championship games

2020: LSU 42, Clemson 25
2019: Clemson 44, Alabama 16
2018: Alabama 26, Georgia 23 (OT)
2017: Clemson 35, Alabama 31
2016: Alabama 45, Clemson 40
2015: Ohio State 42, Oregon 20

Idle thought

Michigan has never made the CFP and until it finds a way to beat Ohio State, never will!!

On with the forecast:

COLLEGE

Last week: 5-2. .714
Season: 343-110. .757

BOWLS

Today
Arizona
San Jose St. 42, Ball State 31
Liberty
Army 27, W. Virginia 24
Armed Forces
Miss. State 34. Tulsa 30
Friday
Rose
Alabama 42, Notre Dame 24
Sugar
Clemson 35, Ohio State 23
Peach
Georgia 31, Cincinnati 23
Citrus
Northwestern 27, Auburn 24
Saturday
Gator
N.C. State 28, Kentucky 24
Outback
Indiana 31, Mississippi 27
Fiesta
Iowa State 34, Oregon 31
Orange
Texas A&M 45, N. Carolina 34

Al Arend is a sports correspondent for The Herald-Palladium. His weekly football predictions appear every Thursday throughout the college season. This his final picks column for this season.

Trubisky, Robinson focused on Packers instead of 2021

By GENE CHAMBERLAIN
Associated Press

LAKE FOREST, Ill. — When quarterback Mitchell Trubisky and wide receiver Allen Robinson face the Green Bay Packers on Sunday at Soldier Field, it could be the last time they wear a Chicago Bears uniform.

It's also going to be one of the last things on their minds as they focus on trying to earn an NFC wild-card playoff berth.

"I won't be thinking about that, no," Trubisky said. "I'll be locked in and ready to go for the game. I'm excited about that opportunity."

Trubisky has led a three-game winning streak against three struggling teams during his return from a Week 3 benching, while Robinson last week hit the 100-reception mark for the first time in his career.

Both are scheduled to be free agents after this season, and for Trubisky it's been a tumultuous four years in Chicago.

Robinson hasn't wanted to talk about his future since early in the season when he pulled mention of the Bears from his social media pages as contract talks stalled, before putting them back.

"I think everything I've experienced this season has just made me stronger and a better person and player," Trubisky said. "Just what I've had to deal with and everything we've had to overcome as a team, to just see where we're at now I think it gives you confidence going into it."

With his fifth-year contract option already declined, Trubisky returned from his benching in Week 3 against Atlanta to face the Packers Nov. 29 and the result was a 41-25 loss at Lambeau Field. They trailed 41-10 in the second half, but the Bears say they saw their offense starting to come together behind Trubisky and a revamped offensive line.

The Bears have scored 30 or more points in four straight games for the first time since 1965, and Robinson has seen a different quarterback in Trubisky's return.

"I think he's handled it extremely well," Robinson said. "I even think for him as a player – I know from my own personal experience – when you go through things like that and you look back at it you get a lot more out of yourself.

"You look a little bit, not differently about yourself, but how you handle adversity through a season I think helps you in the future. I think he'll look back at it and say it made him a better player in some form or fashion."

Bears coach Matt Nagy said most people outside the Bears organization will never realize fully the lows Trubisky has been through this season, along with the rest of their offense.

"For him to be able to persevere through that is certainly not easy but I think what it's done, he's been able to show his teammates that he's a team-first guy," Nagy said. "He didn't complain when we went with Nick (Foles). All he did was stay locked in and he was a great teammate on the sideline for Nick."

Even when Trubisky returned, the Bears lost. They were blown out by Green Bay and squandered a 10-point lead to Detroit in the closing minutes before the offense turned it around to start a three-game winning streak.

"He didn't go the other way," Nagy said. "He stayed positive. He stayed humble. He stayed aggressive. But now he's playing at a high level and you know we just gotta keep it going."

Despite trades, Cubs plan to compete

By ANDREW SELIGMAN
Associated Press

Nam Y. Huh / AP

Then-Chicago Cubs starting pitcher Yu Darvish throws during the first inning in Game 2 of the team's NL wild-card baseball series against the Miami Marlins on Oct. 2.

CHICAGO — Jed Hoyer insists this time won't be like 2011 for the Chicago Cubs.

The team's new president of baseball operations said Wednesday that Chicago plans to retool rather than bring out the wrecking ball the way it did nine years ago.

Still, this one will leave a mark.

In his first major deal since replacing friend Theo Epstein, Hoyer sent NL Cy Young Award runner-up Yu Darvish and catcher Victor Caratini to the San Diego Padres for pitcher Zach Davies and four young minor leaguers Tuesday night.

On deck: Willson Contreras? Maybe Kris Bryant, Javier Báez or Anthony Rizzo?

Nothing is off the table, though Hoyer was adamant: The Cubs aren't following the 2011 plan. That was the year they hired Epstein and Hoyer, and the pair set the long-suffering franchise on a championship course by overhauling the farm system and revamping the front office. Along the way, Cubs fans endured a painful rebuild that included a 101-loss 2012 season.

"I'm not going to run the same playbook that we ran in 2011 and 2012," said Hoyer, who was promoted from general manager when Epstein resigned in November. "I think that would be foolish. That playbook's been copied so many times, it doesn't work anymore."

He said he's trying to keep "one eye on the future" while remaining competitive in the NL Central. The Cubs won the World Series in 2016, ending a drought that dated to 1908, but they haven't advanced in the postseason since the 2017 team lost in the NL Championship Series.

Still led by the 2016 core of Rizzo, Bryant, Baez and others, Chicago won the division in a pandemic-shortened 2020 season but was swept by Miami in the first round of the playoffs.

"We know that we're coming to the end of this group of players – a wildly successful, franchise-changing run with this group of players," Hoyer said. "As we come to the end of that, it's really important to think about the future."

He cited the New York Yankees and Boston Red Sox as teams that benefited recently from "a small reset." And he said the Cubs don't want to fall off the way the San Francisco Giants, Philadelphia Phillies and Detroit Tigers over the past decade.

The Cubs also wanted to add to their minor league system, and the trade with San Diego was a beginning.

Davies, who was 7-4 with a 2.73 ERA in 12 starts, somewhat offsets the loss of Darvish. The 27-year-old right-hander can become a free agent after next season.

The four prospects the Cubs acquired – infielders Reginald Preciado, 17, and Yeison Santana, 20; and outfielders Owen Caissie, 18, and Ismael Mena, 18 – are likely years away from the majors. None were among the most prized in San Diego's deep system. But Hoyer said they will boost Chicago's.

"In a contracting financial market ... I do feel like by definition people are going to hold on tighter to those close-to-the-big-leagues prospects because those are cheap, they're talented," Hoyer said. "As you cut back money, those guys become more important."

The Cubs declined veteran lefthander Jon Lester's option for 2021 in October, allowing the five-time All-Star to become a free agent, and they let outfielders Kyle Schwarber and Albert Almora Jr. go on Dec. 2.

The Darvish trade is by far Hoyer's biggest move, but more major decisions loom.

Bryant, Báez and Rizzo can become free agents after next season. Hoyer said the Cubs have made "incredibly aggressive" offers for contract extensions and will continue to try to reach agreements with them.

"We haven't gotten extensions, and as a result, there are contractual realities to how long we control some of these players," Hoyer said. "I think we'd be foolish not to keep that in mind as we move forward."

Another potential trade target could be Contreras. Hoyer called reports that the Cubs are shopping the two-time All-Star catcher "fictional."

The Cubs have holes to address in their rotation behind Kyle Hendricks and Davies, with Lester, Jose Quintana and Tyler Chatwood gone to free agency. Darvish had three years and $59 million left on the $126 million, six-year deal he signed with the Cubs before the 2018 season.

"We know we have to add players through free agency and we'll be looking to do that," Hoyer said.

Roster issues aren't all the Cubs have to address. There's also an opening for a general manager.

Hoyer said that job probably won't be filled until the summer, when he hopes to be able to conduct interviews in person rather than by Zoom. He said the next GM will "definitely" come from outside the organization.

"I feel like it's really important for me to spend time with the person that we're going to hire, to be able to have multiple dinners together, to meet their family," Hoyer said.

Notre Dame falls to No. 23 Virginia in ACC contest

By ANTHONY ANDERSON
Associated Press

SOUTH BEND — Virginia's momentary shakiness against surging Notre Dame reminded Cavaliers coach Tony Bennett of a toy from the 1970s.

"Weebles wobble, but they don't fall down," Bennett said after the No. 23 Cavaliers relinquished almost all of an 11-point second-half lead, then pulled away late for a 66-57 victory over the Fighting Irish on Wednesday night.

"Our young guys don't know what that is," Bennett said of the old-time toy, "but we wobbled a couple times, but we didn't fall down."

Kihei Clark had 19 points and five assists as No. 23 Virginia continued its string of dominance over Notre Dame.

The Cavaliers (5-2, 1-0) improved to 12-0 in Atlantic Coast Conference openers under Bennett and 10-0 in ACC regular-season matchups against the Irish.

Robert Franklin / AP

Notre Dame's Nate Laszewski (14) comes down with a rebound next to Virginia's Justin McKoy (4) and Notre Dame's Juwan Durham (11) during the first half of Wednesday's game.

Jay Huff scored 15 points for Virginia. Sam Hauser added 13 points and 10 rebounds.

Notre Dame (3-5, 0-2) fell despite a career-high 28 points from Nate Laszewski. The junior forward hit 8 of 11 shots from the field with four 3-pointers to go with 8 of 10 at the line.

"Durham and Laszewski hurt us," Bennett said. "We've got to kind of shore up against some of these good fours and fives (positionally)."

"Our two big guys did play great," Notre Dame coach Mike Brey said. "We've got to build on that even though we didn't win the game."

The Cavaliers led at every count except 2-2 and were up 35-24 by early in the second half, but the Irish twice clawed within one point, the last time at 47-46 with 8:26 remaining.

Notre Dame also had a chance to tie it at 54, but Cormac Ryan's wide open 3-pointer rimmed around and softly out.

"I thought Cormac's 3 in the corner that was halfway down was key," Brey said after Ryan finished the night scoreless on four attempts. "We missed that one, (then) they made one (a 23-footer by Trey Murphy III), and that was kind of our last shot."

The Irish, trailing 30-23 at the time, lost starting guard Trey Wertz to a left ankle injury with 30 seconds to go in the first half.

Brey estimated that Wertz might miss "a couple weeks."

PRIME TIME TV

THURSDAY EVENING DEC. 31

	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30
ABC 7 13 41 57	Wheel of Fortune	Dick Clark's Primetime New Year's Rockin' Eve With Ryan Seacrest 2021 (N) CC				Dick Clark's Primetime New Year's	
CBS 2 3 22	Ent. Tonight	Young Sheldon	:31 B Positive	:01 Mom CC	The Unicorn	FBI "The Lives of Others" CC	
NBC 5 8 16	Ac. Hollywood	New Year's Eve: Escape From 2020 (N) CC				NBC's New Year's Eve 2021 (N) CC	
FOX 17 222 28 32	Modern Family	FOX's New Year's Eve Toast & Roast 2021 Festivities in Los Angeles. (N) (L) CC				Fox 17 News at 10:00PM (N) CC	
PBS 34	Radar-Michigan	Frankie Drake Mysteries "Anastasia"		Father Brown Dollhouse crime scene.		United in Song: Celebrating	
CW 25	Big Bang Theory	iHeartRadio Music Festival Night 1 Highlights of the annual event. CC				News	Seinfeld CC
MNT 50	Family Feud	Dateline "Secret Lives" CC		Dateline "After the Party" CC		Law & Order: Criminal Intent CC	
WCIU 26	Mike & Molly	iHeartRadio Music Festival Night 1 Highlights of the annual event. CC				King of Queens	King of Queens
WHME 46	:00 Heartland	Heartland "Breaking Free" CC		Highway to Heaven CC		Nightly News	
WGN 9	News	black-ish CC	black-ish CC	Last Man Standing	Last Man Standing	WGN News at Nine (N) (L) CC	
A&E	:00 The First 48	The First 48 A father of three is executed.		The First 48 A welder goes missing.		:01 The First 48 CC	
AMC	:00 ★★★ Charlie and the Chocolate Factory ('05, Children's) Johnny Depp. CC					★★★ Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory ('71) CC	
Animal	Gold	Gold Rush CC		Gold Rush CC		Gold Rush CC	
BET	6:30 The Nutty Professor			★★ Nutty Professor II: The Klumps			
Big Ten	Ohio State Bowl		Ohio State Bowl		B1G	Ohio State Bowl	
Bravo	Real House.	The Real Housewives of Dallas		8:55 Southern Charm (N) CC		Chrisley Knows	Chrisley Knows
Cartoon	Gumball	Burgers	Burgers	American	American	Rick	Rick
Cinemax	The Fighter	★★ Valkyrie ('08, Historical Drama) Tom Cruise, Kenneth Branagh. CC				:02 ★★ Surrogates ('09) CC	
CMT	6:00 Grease		★★ Sixteen Candles ('84) CC				Breakfast
CNBC	S. Smith	Shark Tank CC		Shark Tank		Shark Tank	
CNN	OutFront	New Year's Eve Live with Anderson Cooper and Andy Cohen (N)					
Comedy	South Pk	South Pk	South Pk	South Pk	South Pk	South Pk	South Pk
Discovery	:00 Serengeti	Expedition Unknown (Part 1 of 2) CC		Expedition Unknown (Part 2 of 2) CC		Expedition Unknown "Nazis in Argentina"	
Disney	Jessie	Jessie	Jessie	Jessie	Jessie	Star New Year	
DIY	Lakefront	Restoring Galveston		Restoring Galveston		Restoring Galveston	
E!	Vegas	Las Vegas CC		Las Vegas CC		Las Vegas CC	
ESPN	Scores	College Football Mercari Texas Bowl -- Arkansas vs TCU. (N)					
ESPN2	College Basketball			College Basketball Colorado at USC. (N)			
ESPNC	Football	College Football From Nov. 18, 1995.				College Football	
Food	Diners	Diners, Drive		Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners
Fox News	Who Can	Greg Gutfeld		The Five CC		Who Can Forget	
Fox Sports	Baseball	Red Wings Classics Game 4 of the Stanley Cup Finals.					Lions
Freefrm	5:30 ★★ National Treasure ('04)		★★ National Treasure: Book of Secrets ('07, Action) Nicolas Cage, Jon Voight, Harvey Keitel. CC				
FX	:00 ★★ Venom ('18, Action) Tom Hardy, Michelle Williams, Riz Ahmed. CC				★★ Venom ('18) Tom Hardy, Michelle Williams. CC		
Golf	:00 PGA Tour Golf CC					PGA Golf	
Hallmark	Cmas Wrote	The Sweetest Christmas ('17, Romance) Lacey Chabert, Lea Coco. CC				Picture a Perfect Christmas ('19)	
HBO	Just Mercy	★★★ Ford v Ferrari ('19) Matt Damon. A designer builds a car to race against the Ferrari in 1966.				:35 Joker	
History	Swamp	Swamp People: Ser		Swamp People: Ser		Swamp People: Ser	
HGTV	Love-List	Love It or List It		Love It or List It		Love It or List It	
Learning	90 Day	90 Day Fiancé		90 Day Fiancé		90 Day Fiancé	
Lifetime	Back-Future II	★★★ Mean Girls ('04, Comedy) Lindsay Lohan, Rachel McAdams. CC				:03 ★★ Miss Congeniality ('00)	
MSNBC	Maddow	The Way I See It ('20) Pete Souza.				The Way I See It	
MTV	Ridic.	Ridic.	Ridic.	Ridic.	Ridic.	Ridic.	Ridic.
NBCSCH	Postgame	NBA Basketball: Bulls at Wizards				Bensinger	Outdoor
NFL	NFL Total	NFL Football Teams TBA. CC					
Nick	Sponge.	Sponge.	Sponge.	Sheldon	Sheldon	Friends	Friends
NGEO	Life Be	Life Below Zero		Life Below Zero (N)		Cursed Places-Map	
Oxygen	Dateline: Secrets	Dateline: Secrets Uncovered (N) CC		Dateline: Secrets Uncovered "A Gathering Storm" A troubled father is found dead.			
Parmt	★★★ John Wick ('14, Action) CC				★★★ John Wick ('14)		
Showtime	:00 ★★★ 1917 ('19, War) George MacKay. CC			Your Honor "Part Four" CC		★★★ Hustlers ('19) CC	
Starz	:07 ★ Blumhouse's Fantasy Island ('20) Michael Peña.			★★ Bad Boys for Life ('20, Action) Will Smith, Martin Lawrence. CC			
STZENC	:09 ★★ Days of Thunder ('90, Action) Tom Cruise. CC			★★ The Beach ('00, Drama) Leonardo DiCaprio, Tilda Swinton. CC			
SyFy	The Twilight Zone	The Twilight Zone	The Twilight Zone	The Twilight Zone	The Twilight Zone	The Twilight Zone	The Twilight Zone
TBS	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory
TCM	Song-Thin Man	★★★ That's Entertainment! ('74) Fred Astaire, Bing Crosby. Clips from 1928-58 MGM musicals. CC					That's Ent. 2
TMC	The Cooler	★★★ Inside Man ('06, Suspense) Denzel Washington, Clive Owen. CC				:10 ★★★ Patriot Games ('92)	
TNT	★★★ Black Panther ('18) Chadwick Boseman. CC (DVS)						Rampage
Travel	Paranorm.	Paranormal Ca.		Paranormal Ca.		Paranormal Ca.	
TV Land	Andy G.	King	King	King	King	King	King
USA	Law & Order: SVU	Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit	
VH1	Eclipse	★★ The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1					Twilight
WGN-A	Last Man Standing	NewsNation (N) (L) CC		NewsNation (N) (L) CC		NewsNation (N) (L) CC	

Jealousy creates a barrier between biological siblings

Jeanne Phillips
Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I'm an American man who was adopted as an infant. Several years ago, I found my birth parents. They are not from America. My mother came here to give birth and left. Sometime later she married my father and had more children. I'm in touch with the entire family, but mainly my birth parents.

My biological siblings are jealous of my success in life and make it plain they don't approve of much that I do. They also make sure I know I'm not REALLY part of the family because we didn't grow up together (although we are, by blood, 100 percent siblings).

I deal with this the best I can, but now I'm getting flak from them because of my political views. (They saw a photo of me at a political fundraiser.) When my sister turned 40 this year, I sent her a card, a Facebook post and a text message. I turned 50 at the same time and heard not a word from her.

Although my siblings are not Americans, they feel the need to trash our country, our government and our way of life. I'm tempted to cut ties with them. There is little respect coming my way, and I think I've had enough. I value your opinion, which is why I am writing to you now.

BTW: I had an amazing set of (now deceased) parents and wonderful siblings growing up. I just wish I had a better relationship with my biological family. – Disappointed And Excluded

DEAR DISAPPOINTED: Your family is the family that raised and nurtured you. I, too, am sorry you don't have a better relationship with these jealous, judgmental people. You are related by blood – nothing more. They do not have the right to criticize your political views or your lifestyle, any more than you have the right to criticize theirs. (And I doubt you would.) Because you are neither respected nor included, you have every right to back off and head in a different, more positive direction. Frankly, I suspect you will feel better as soon as you do.

DEAR ABBY: I'm a 26-year-old male in a long-distance relationship with my girlfriend, who is 18. I love her to the moon and back, but I feel like she only stays with me because I can buy her things. She gets upset with me when I don't get them for her. She says I value my mother and others before her.

I love her so much, and I want to marry her. I'm a minister at a church. She thinks she should take priority before my bills and taking care of my mother, who can barely walk. What do I do? – Uneasy In New Jersey

DEAR UNEASY: From what you have written, it appears you are involved with an 18-year-old self-involved gold digger who does seem to be with you only because of what you give her. She hasn't yet learned (1) That a gift should be voluntary and appreciated, rather than extorted, and (2) the way a man treats his mother is the way he will treat his wife.

Since you asked my advice, here it is: Close your wallet and ditch this "girl."

DEAR READERS: Well, 2020, a year like no other in recent memory, has drawn to a close! I join you tonight in toasting a 2021 that will be less challenging for all of us. If you're celebrating this evening, please take measures to protect your health and the safety of others. – Love, Abby

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

The definitive formula for calculating partner's minimum age

Carolyn Hax

DEAR CAROLYN: I'm 53, divorced for 10 years and have struggled with finding the appropriate age range of women I should pursue. Female friends have suggested a formula for a minimum age – "half your age plus 10."

However, when I start dating someone near this minimum, these same friends criticize me for dating someone too young. I'm not interested in any sort of trophy.

Is it unreasonable to seek a companion who is my junior by 10 or 15 years? – Confused Man

DEAR CONFUSED MAN: The definitive formula is: Your age divided by 7, plus number of years of education, times the number of previous marriages between you, minus the arbitrary formulas of underoccupied busybodies who have no direct say in your life, plus a forehead slap.

You're 53 years old. Date women you want to date.

DEAR CAROLYN: I dated an adorable man for four months. It was quite romantic and passionate in the beginning; he stated his "intentions were honorable" and he wanted to "woo" me. I willingly obliged to the wooing.

So now it's over and I feel a fool for having fallen so deeply into someone so new. He wants to be friends, but I'm feeling adrift and less than a priority on his not-very-full plate.

Is it possible to be friends with someone you've fallen in love with? If so, how? – A.

DEAR A.: If so, why?

Even if he's sincere, he has made you feel only two things: giddy and bad. And the giddy is up. Being "friends" might offer a comforting fiction ("He likes me, the romance just didn't work out"), but it'll likely just extend your time chasing someone who isn't chasing you back.

DEAR CAROLYN: My mostly wonderful boyfriend has a few habits that irk me, e.g. being late all the time. However, I happen to share many of these habits, so I feel as though I can't express my frustration when he's late to the airport because I just did it to him last week.

There must be a constructive, non-finger-pointing way to address this issue but can't seem to come up with it on my own. Any thoughts? – Va.

DEAR VA.: YES. STOP BEING LATE ALL the time.

Once you've kicked all bad habits you resent in other people, you'll have the insight, not to mention standing, to request the same.

DEAR CAROLYN: I love him but we can't reach a resolution on having kids – he thinks taking time apart will give him clarity. We've tried everything else, so we might as well try this.

I love him so much, and I don't want to give up, but I don't know what else to do. I feel like my heart is breaking into pieces. How do I keep hoping and prepare for the worst at the same time? – Chicago

DEAR CHICAGO: Hopelessness doesn't get the credit it deserves. Not only is it the antidote both to false hopes and prolonged agony, but also the first step toward constructive thought.

Till now, hoping you could have this guy on your terms has shielded you from your own mind. So, ask yourself now: Which matters more, the guy or the terms?

Even if he says yes to kids, you'll be better for the deeper thought.

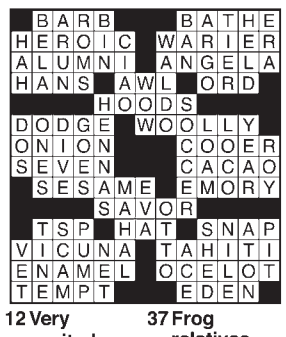
Email Carolyn Hax at tellme@washpost.com, follow her on Facebook at www.facebook.com/carolyn.hax or chat with her online at noon each Friday at www.washingtonpost.com.

CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Cluster
6 Sesame Street grouch
11 Team spirit
12 Docket
13 Small domestic fowl
14 Mad rush
15 Torch's misdeed
16 Carpe —
17 Disparaging remark
19 Thickish piece
23 Big roll of bills
26 Retired
28 — -de-France
29 — Abdul-Jabbar
31 — wrench
33 Co. honchos
34 On a plane
35 Itch
36 Scissors sound
39 Interest amt.
40 Unforeseen difficulty
42 Get by effort
44 Bored response
46 Actor — Welles
51 Vivacity
54 Spurious
55 Herculean tasks
56 Charred
57 Like a damp rock
58 Doesn't do much

DOWN
1 Male hog
2 Samovars
3 Alliance acronym
4 Lairds' households
5 Skirt border
6 Fairy tale heavy
7 Appears
8 1980 Turner launch
9 Sharp tool
10 Beam of light
11 Wall Street deg.
12 Very excited
16 Add sound effects
18 Hasty escape
20 Purple hue
21 Wide-awake
22 Give a little
23 Pale
24 Rock concert venue
25 Cold mo.
27 Smidgen
29 Janitor's need
30 19th letter
32 Cut off, as branches
34 Spring mo.
37 Frog relatives
38 Fleming of spydom
41 Pita treats
43 Pushed ahead
45 Well-ventilated
47 Not an illusion
48 Certain
49 Verse forms
50 Auction signal
51 Horror film street
52 — Paulo
53 "This Old House" network
54 Tire pressure meas.

Answer to Previous Puzzle



12-31 © 2020 UFS, Dist. by Andrews McMeel Syndication for UFS

JUMBLE

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SIPOE

PMYET

LUDOEB

SANMUK

C'mon! It's almost here!
We take a picture every year at midnight.
I proposed to her on New Year's.
Is that really you?
THEY LOOKED AT THEIR PHOTOS OF THE NYC NEW YEAR'S EVE BALL DROP FOR ---

Get the free JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

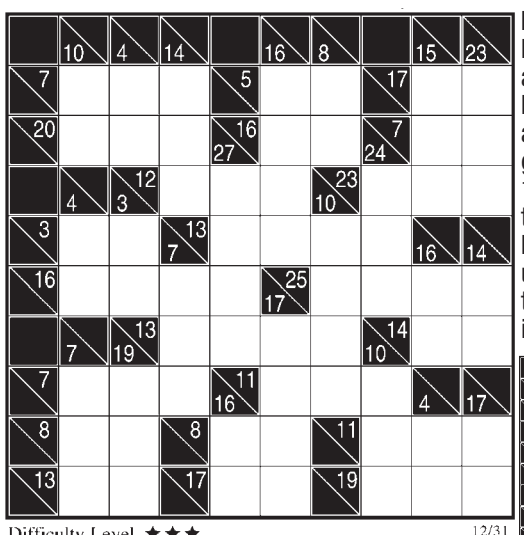
©2020 Tribune Content Agency, LLC All Rights Reserved.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

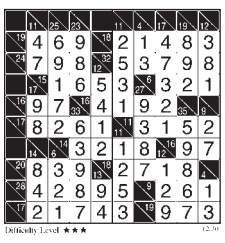
Yesterday's Jumbles: REUSE BLOCK VACANT CANOLA
Answer: He got woozy after learning all of his savings had been stolen and — LOST HIS BALANCE

KAKURO



Difficulty Level ★★★ 12/31

How to play: Numbers above the slash are across clues; numbers below the slash are down clues. The goal is to enter digits 1-9 in the white cells to add up to the number clues. You cannot use any digit more than once when adding up to a clue.



BRIDGE

Paul Simon's "The 59th Street Bridge Song" begins: "Slow down, you move too fast / You got to make the morning last / Just kicking down the cobblestones / Looking for fun and feelin' groovy."

New York City marathoners can relate to that. The 59th Street Bridge is just past halfway, but it is tough because it has a steep rise and is very hard on the feet. The end of the bridge, though, is great because it is downhill and there are numerous people waiting on 1st Avenue to cheer the runners on.

At the bridge table, everyone should slow down at trick one. More mistakes are made at that trick than at any other.

In this example, how should South play in four spades after West leads a low heart?

In the auction, North made a cue-bid raise to show at least game-invitational values with three or more trumps. If this looks like an overbid with a heart king that could well be worthless, North's hand contains only eight losers even if you count two in hearts, and has the valuable fourth trump. (Regular readers will know that I would have advanced with two no-trump, guaranteeing at least four-card support. I like to know when we have only eight trumps and when we have nine.)

South seems to have 10 sure tricks: four spades, one diamond and five clubs. How might he go down? Only if the defenders take one spade, two hearts and one diamond. But to get that diamond, West has to push the suit through the dummy. To stop West from regaining the lead, declarer must play dummy's low heart at trick one, not the king.

North 12-31-20
♠ J 7 6 3
♥ K 8
♦ A 5
♣ Q 10 9 8 6

West
♠ 4 2
♥ Q 10 2
♦ 9 7 6 4 3 2
♣ 4 3

East
♠ A 8
♥ A J 9 7 6 5
♦ K J 10
♣ 5 2

South
♠ K Q 10 9 5
♥ 4 3
♦ Q 8
♣ A K J 7

Dealer: East
Vulnerable: Neither

South	West	North	East
			1♥
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Opening lead: ♥ 2

SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★☆☆

		2					9	
7		9	2	4				
				7	9	2		
9		3			8			4
	7	4		6		8	3	
8			3			1		7
		5	9	3				
				2	5	9		1
	9					6		

12/31 © 2020 Dist. by Andrews McMeel Syndication for UFS

How to play: Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9.

PREVIOUS SOLUTION

6	8	3	9	2	7	4	1	5
2	4	5	6	3	1	9	7	8
1	9	7	4	5	8	2	3	6
3	5	9	2	1	4	6	8	7
8	1	2	5	7	6	3	9	4
4	7	6	3	8	9	1	5	2
9	3	4	7	6	5	8	2	1
5	6	1	8	9	2	7	4	3
7	2	8	1	4	3	5	6	9

Photos provided
Healthy to the Core took first place with their Tree of Health.

Second place went to Grinchmas by the McKee/Cook family.

Debbie Friday's Upside Down Kind of Year finished in third place.

Museum announces tree contest winners

The North Berrien Historical Museum's annual Holiday Open House was reinvented this year as the I'll Be Home For Holiday Open House.

The event included three recorded videos from Santa and Mrs. Claus, more than 25 historical Facebook posts, an activity booklet designed for third and fourth graders that was printed and delivered to students, and the Holiday Tree Contest.

"The interest online has been astounding," Executive Director and Curator Jack Greve said in a news release. "We engaged with over 26,000 Facebook users in December, had an increase in online sales, donations and memberships, and received many words of encouragement from the community."

The tree contest garnered 422 votes. With 46 votes, Debbie Friday took third place with her tree, Upside Down Kind of Year. In second place, Grinchmas, created by the McKee/Cook family, gained 62 votes. And with a narrow margin of only 5 votes, Healthy to the Core took first place with their Tree of Health.

IN BRIEF

Whalen wins MSU award

EAST LANSING — St. Joseph resident Katie McHale Whalen, a Lakeshore High School graduate, recently was honored with the Michigan State University Board of Trustees Award for the fall semester.

WHALEN

The award is given to graduating seniors with the highest scholastic average: a 4.0 GPA. Whalen was one of 29 recipients for the fall semester.

A human biology major in the College of Natural Science, she also was a member of the Honors College.

5K raises $6K for local charities

More than 300 racers participated in this year's Fit 4 Fall "Stay Safe" Virtual 5K run/walk in October, raising more than $6,000, according to a news release.

Despite all the COVID-19 changes and precautions, a new record was set for individual donations. Proceeds were donated to Caring Circle, LOGAN Autism Learning Center – Southwest Michigan and the Michigan Great Lakes Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association.

The 5K, sponsored by LECO Corp., raises funds for charities who have served LECO employees over the years. This year, due to pandemic restrictions, the committee opted to hold a virtual race.

The new format meant the event was open to a global participant pool. More than 50 LECO employees from outside the U.S. participated, according to the release. In all, 258 racers finished and posted their times.

The 2021 Fit 4 Fall 5K is scheduled for Oct. 9 in St. Joseph. While the race is expected to be in person, the virtual race option will remain.

For more information, visit www.fit4fall5k.com.

Van Buren sheriff's office provides for those in need

This Christmas season, the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office raised $3,800 in cash, $3,490 in gift cards, and many household and clothing items to provide for nine families in need, according to a news release.

The South Haven Meijer donated $3,000 in gift cards, decorated shopping carts, and offered a special checkout lane while deputies and volunteers shopped for the families.

The Christmas gifts were wrapped by volunteers from the sheriff's office. On Dec. 19, the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office delivered the Christmas gifts, which included toys, clothes, food and other items to the families.

ENCORE postponed again

ST. JOSEPH — The St. Joseph Public Schools Foundation Board of Directors and the ENCORE Steering Committee has announced the postponement of Encore 2020ne.

This is the second time the fundraising show featuring talented St. Joseph High School alumni has been rescheduled due to COVID-19.

The show will now be staged on Aug. 12-13, 2022, and will coincide with the high school's 150th commencement ceremony year.

Dennis Bowen, longtime choral director at SJHS and producer of ENCORE, said, "This decision was made out of the utmost regard for the health of our community, and the nearly 200 cast members, who travel from all over the world to perform at their alma mater."

For more info about the foundation, visit www.sjpsfoundation.org.

ON CAMPUS

Degrees

These area students have received a college or university degree.

Michigan State University
East Lansing

St. Joseph – Katie McHale Whalen, bachelor of science in human biology, with high honors

Palmer College of Chiropractic
Davenport, Iowa

Cassopolis – Ryan Loupee, bachelor of science in general science and doctor of chiropractic

Lawton – Monica Toso, doctor of chiropractic

Southwestern Michigan College
Dowagiac

Benton Harbor – Alexander Davis, associate in nursing

Berrien Center – Angela Sackett, associate in nursing

Coloma – Gabrielle Tavolacci, associate in nursing

Decatur – Jamie Adams, associate in nursing

Edwardsburg – Jordan Tighe, associate in nursing

Hartford – Ashley Kyles, associate in nursing

Niles – Nicole Reidenbach, associate in nursing

Vandalia – Allison Brossman, associate in nursing

University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kan.

St. Joseph – Dihan Sameera Thilakaratne, doctor of medicine

Dean's list

These area students have been named to a college or university's dean's list.

Belmont University
Nashville, Tenn.

Galien – Teya Haughey
New Buffalo – Sheridan Spiess
Stevensville – Natalie Brunner

Knox College
Galesburg, Ill.

Paw Paw – Brooklyn Deming

Olivet Nazarene University
Bourbonnais, Ill.

Buchanan – Keith Gallegos
Niles – Camden Lorance
Stevensville – Joel Brawley

St. Mary's College
Notre Dame, Ind.

St. Joseph – Nadia Muniz

Honor society

These area students have been inducted into a college or university honor society.

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo

All Phi Kappa Phi:
Grand Junction – Kristen Brenner
Paw Paw – Hannah Garrod
St. Joseph – Courtney Farrish and Nora Duncan
Stevensville – Damien Boyer

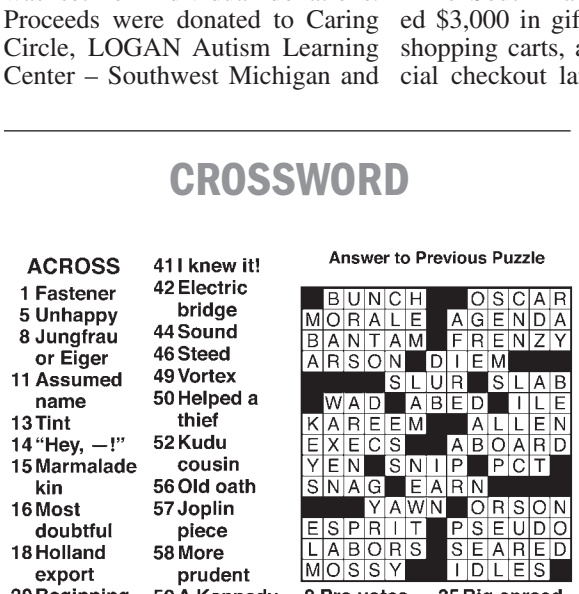
CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Fastener
5 Unhappy
8 Jungfrau or Eiger
11 Assumed name
13 Tint
14 "Hey, —!"
15 Marmalade kin
16 Most doubtful
18 Holland export
20 Beginning
21 Whirls around
23 Implore
24 Travel option
25 Pantyhose shade
27 War god
31 Choose
32 Team cheers
33 Mock fanfare (hyph.)
34 Complaint
36 Scrabble piece
38 Drink like Rover
39 Desiccated
40 Role model, maybe
41 I knew it!
42 Electric bridge
44 Sound
46 Steed
49 Vortex
50 Helped a thief
52 Kudu cousin
56 Old oath
57 Joplin piece
58 More prudent
59 A Kennedy
60 Prospector's find
61 Slaps the cuffs on

DOWN
1 Mecca pilgrimage
2 Stein filler
3 — vous plait
4 More bleached-out
5 Carpenter's wedge
6 — Wiedersehen
7 Crusoe's creator
8 Pro votes
9 Forfeit
10 Golfer's tap
12 Aussie city
17 Silver bar
19 Like a monk
21 Plains dwelling
22 Sheer
23 Gaggle of sightseers
24 Income sources
26 Surprise attack
28 — Lama
29 Baking potato
30 Vineyard valley
35 Big spread
37 Gives the slip
43 Of an earlier style
45 Actor Sprouse
46 Tool handle
47 Emmy relative
48 Plant in a swamp
49 Margin
51 Means of hearing
53 Turkish potentate
54 Midwest st.
55 AMA members

Answer to Previous Puzzle

	B	U	N	C	H			O	S	C	A	R
M	O	R	A	L	E		A	G	E	N	D	A
B	A	N	T	A	M		F	R	E	N	Z	Y
A	R	S	O	N		D	I	E	M			
				S	L	U	R		S	L	A	B
	W	A	D		A	B	E	D		I	L	E
K	A	R	E	E	M			A	L	L	E	N
E	X	E	C	S			A	B	O	A	R	D
Y	E	N		S	N	I	P		P	C	T	
S	N	A	G		E	A	R	N				
			Y	A	W	N		O	R	S	O	N
E	S	P	R	I	T		P	S	E	U	D	O
L	A	B	O	R	S		S	E	A	R	E	D
M	O	S	S	Y			I	D	L	E	S	



1-1 © 2021 UFS, Dist. by Andrews McMeel Syndication for UFS

JUMBLE

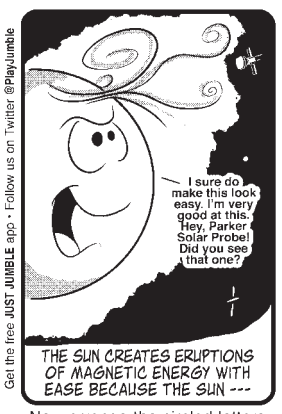
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

FUFLF

NIHOR

MGADEA

SNTIGR


I sure do make this look easy. I'm very good at this. Hey, Parker Solar Probe! Did you see that one?
THE SUN CREATES ERUPTIONS OF MAGNETIC ENERGY WITH EASE BECAUSE THE SUN ---

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

©2021 Tribune Content Agency, LLC All Rights Reserved.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

A " " (Answers tomorrow)

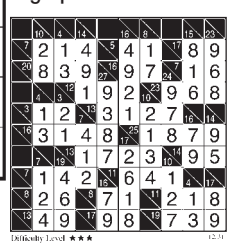
Yesterday's Jumbles: POISE EMPTY DOUBLE UNMASK
Answer: They looked at their photos of the NYC New Year's Eve ball drop for — OLD TIMES' SAKE

KAKURO

	27	37	7	12	28		39	9	17
21						23			
30						13 24			
6			29 25					39	22
8				30 20					
30					26 26				
34						19 9			
	14	10 3					14 5		
13				15					
8				34					

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/01

How to play: Numbers above the slash are across clues; numbers below the slash are down clues. The goal is to enter digits 1-9 in the white cells to add up to the number clues. You cannot use any digit more than once when adding up to a clue.



BRIDGE

Paul Simon's "The 59th Street Bridge Song" begins: "Slow down, you move too fast / You got to make the morning last / Just kicking down the cobblestones / Looking for fun and feelin' groovy."

New York City marathoners can relate to that. The 59th Street Bridge is just past halfway, but it is tough because it has a steep rise and is very hard on the feet. The end of the bridge, though, is great because it is downhill and there are numerous people waiting on 1st Avenue to cheer the runners on.

At the bridge table, everyone should slow down at trick one. More mistakes are made at that trick than at any other.

In this example, how should South play in four spades after West leads a low heart?

In the auction, North made a cue-bid raise to show at least game-invitational values with three or more trumps. If this looks like an overbid with a heart king that could well be worthless, North's hand contains only eight losers even if you count two in hearts, and has the valuable fourth trump. (Regular readers will know that I would have advanced with two no-trump, guaranteeing at least four-card support. I like to know when we have only eight trumps and when we have nine.)

South seems to have 10 sure tricks: four spades, one diamond and five clubs. How might he go down? Only if the defenders take one spade, two hearts and one diamond. But to get that diamond, West has to push the suit through the dummy. To stop West from regaining the lead, declarer must play dummy's low heart at trick one, not the king.

North 01-01-21
♠ J 9 5 4
♥ A Q J 7
♦ J 10 8 3
♣ 7

West
♠ K Q 10 6
♥ 9 8 6
♦ 9 7 2
♣ Q J 9

East
♠ 8 7 2
♥ K 10 5 4 3
♦ Q
♣ 10 5 4 2

South
♠ A 3
♥ 2
♦ A K 6 5 4
♣ A K 8 6 3

Dealer: South
Vulnerable: East-West

South	West	North	East
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
3♣	Pass	??	

Opening lead: ♠ K

SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

				7			1	5
				5	6			
2	5					8	7	
		8		3				6
			1	6	7			
7				9		5		
	4	5					2	7
			9	4				
6	1			2				

1/1 © 2021 Dist. by Andrews McMeel Syndication for UFS

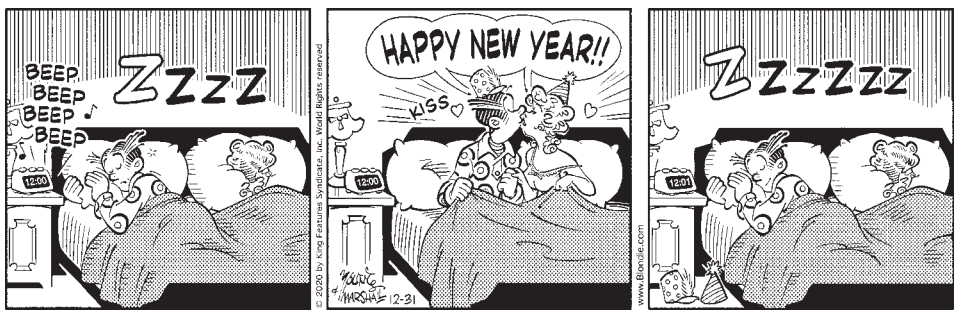
How to play: Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9.

PREVIOUS SOLUTION

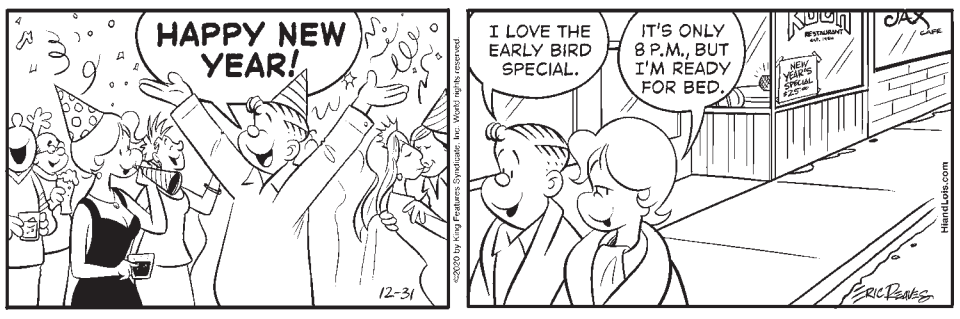
4	6	2	1	5	3	7	9	8
7	8	9	2	4	6	3	1	5
5	3	1	8	7	9	2	4	6
9	2	3	7	1	8	5	6	4
1	7	4	5	6	2	8	3	9
8	5	6	3	9	4	1	2	7
6	1	5	9	3	7	4	8	2
3	4	8	6	2	5	9	7	1
2	9	7	4	8	1	6	5	3

BEETLE BAILEY

BLONDIE

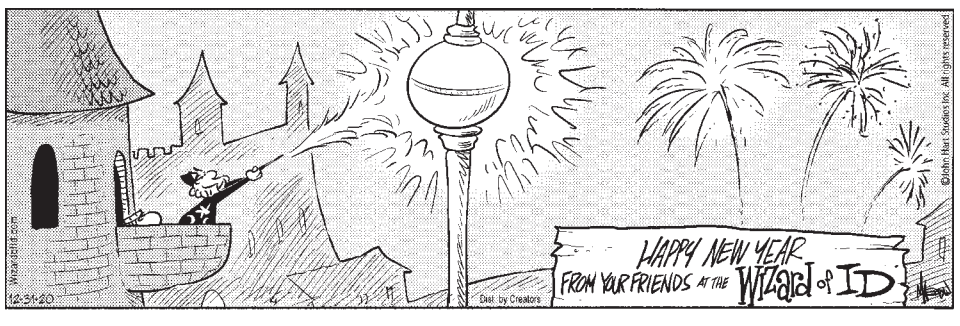


HI & LOIS


HAPPY NEW YEAR!
12-31
©2020 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.
I LOVE THE EARLY BIRD SPECIAL.
IT'S ONLY 8 P.M., BUT I'M READY FOR BED.
HiandLois.com
ERIC REYES

BC

WIZARD OF ID


HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT THE Wizard of ID
12-31-20
Dist. by Creators
©John Hart Studios Inc. All rights reserved
WizardofId.com

DILBERT

FOR A REASONABLE FEE, I WILL AUDIT YOUR COMPANY AND FIND ANY FRAUD OR CRIME IF IT EXISTS.
DILBERT.COM @SCOTTADAMSSAYS
WHAT'S TO STOP YOU FROM TAKING BRIBES FROM THE FRAUDSTERS AND REPORTING THAT EVERYTHING IS FINE?
MY BUSINESS MODEL DEPENDS ON YOU NOT ASKING THAT KIND OF QUESTION.
12-31-20 2020 Scott Adams, Inc./Dist. by Andrews McMeel

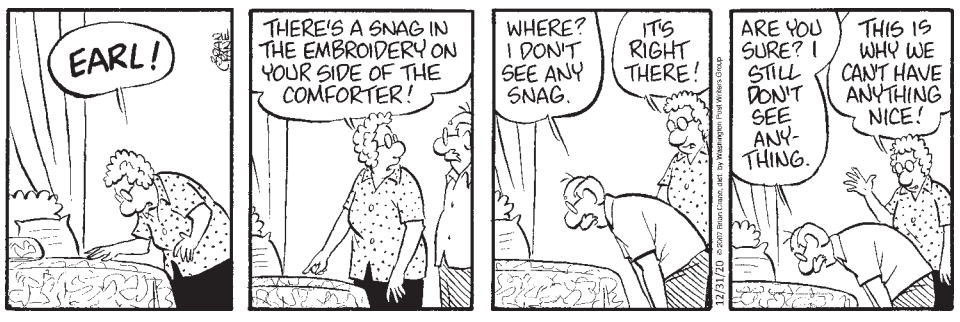
GARFIELD

I WONDER WHAT THE NEW YEAR WILL BRING
JIM DAVIS 12-31
© 2020 PAWS, INC. All Rights Reserved.
I JUST FOUND A GREAT NEW TOFU RECIPE!
BRING BACK THE OLD YEAR!
Distributed by Andrews McMeel Syndication

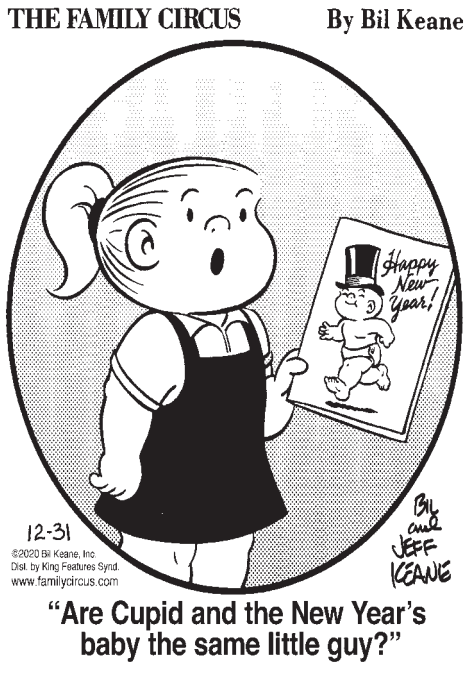
FORT KNOX

I HOPE YOU'RE NOT SERIOUS.
ABOUT MY NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION?
YES, IT WON'T CHANGE YOU.
BUT IT WILL!
AND HOW WILL YOU AVOID GETTING ARRESTED IN 2021?
BY LEAVING YOUR FINGERPRINTS AT THE CRIME SCENES.
12/31
© 2020 Paul Lorn. Dist. by Washington Post Writers Group

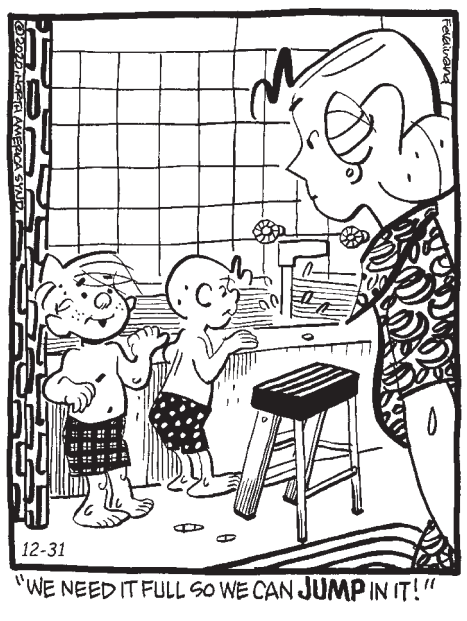
PICKLES


EARL!
THERE'S A SNAG IN THE EMBROIDERY ON YOUR SIDE OF THE COMFORTER!
WHERE? I DON'T SEE ANY SNAG.
IT'S RIGHT THERE!
ARE YOU SURE? I STILL DON'T SEE ANY-THING.
THIS IS WHY WE CAN'T HAVE ANYTHING NICE!
12/31/20 ©2020 Brian Crane. dist. by Washington Post Writers Group

FAMILY CIRCUS

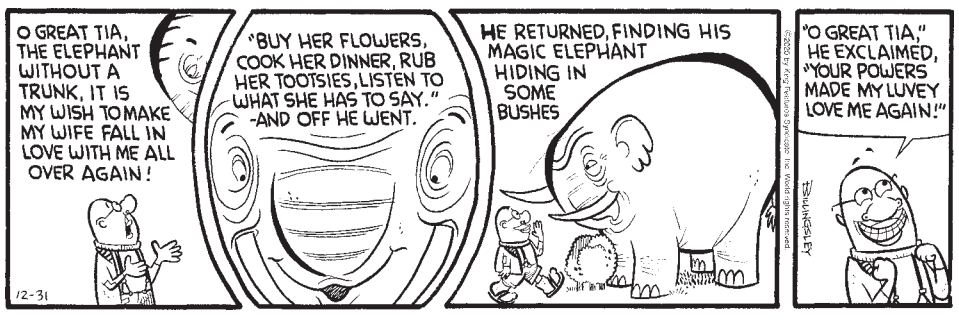


DENNIS THE MENACE



BABY BLUES

CURTIS


O GREAT TIA, THE ELEPHANT WITHOUT A TRUNK, IT IS MY WISH TO MAKE MY WIFE FALL IN LOVE WITH ME ALL OVER AGAIN!
"BUY HER FLOWERS, COOK HER DINNER, RUB HER TOOTSIES, LISTEN TO WHAT SHE HAS TO SAY." -AND OFF HE WENT.
HE RETURNED, FINDING HIS MAGIC ELEPHANT HIDING IN SOME BUSHES
"O GREAT TIA," HE EXCLAIMED, "YOUR POWERS MADE MY LUVEY LOVE ME AGAIN!"
12-31
©2020 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.

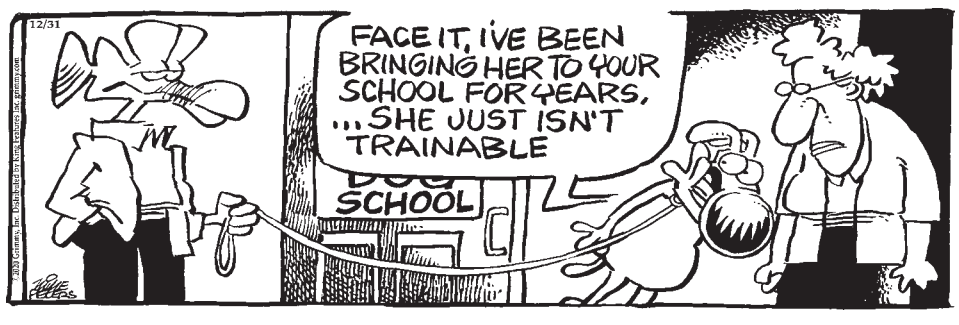
ZITS

ARE YOU MAKING A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION, JEREMY?
YEAH. TO BE MORE GRATEFUL.
EXCELLENT!
AND FOR YOU TO GIVE ME MORE ALLOWANCE.
THAT'S NOT--
...FOR WHICH I'D BE REALLY GRATEFUL.
zitscomics.com
©2020 Zits Partnership. Dist. by King Features

HAGAR THE HORRIBLE

WE'RE OUT OF BEER! DO YOU MIND GOING OUT TO GET MORE?
NOT A PROBLEM!
12-31
©2020 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved
BAR
BROWNE

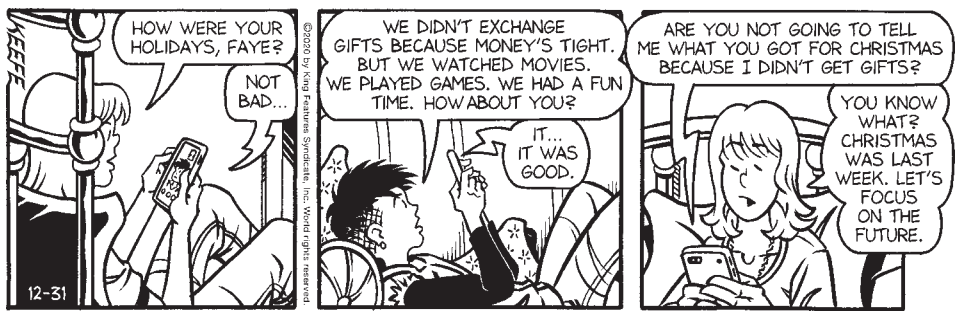
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM


12/31
FACE IT, I'VE BEEN BRINGING HER TO YOUR SCHOOL FOR YEARS, ...SHE JUST ISN'T TRAINABLE
SCHOOL
© 2020 Grimmy, Inc. Distributed by King Features Inc. grimmy.com

MUTTS

I SEE THERE'S ANOTHER NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION ON YOUR LIST FOR ME.
"LEARN A NEW SHKILL"
SHMAY I SUGGEST- CAT MASSAGE?
mutts.com www.kingfeatures.com
12-31

SALLY FORTH


HOW WERE YOUR HOLIDAYS, FAYE?
NOT BAD...
WE DIDN'T EXCHANGE GIFTS BECAUSE MONEY'S TIGHT. BUT WE WATCHED MOVIES. WE PLAYED GAMES. WE HAD A FUN TIME. HOW ABOUT YOU?
IT... IT WAS GOOD.
ARE YOU NOT GOING TO TELL ME WHAT YOU GOT FOR CHRISTMAS BECAUSE I DIDN'T GET GIFTS?
YOU KNOW WHAT? CHRISTMAS WAS LAST WEEK. LET'S FOCUS ON THE FUTURE.
12-31
©2020 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.

The Herald-Palladium

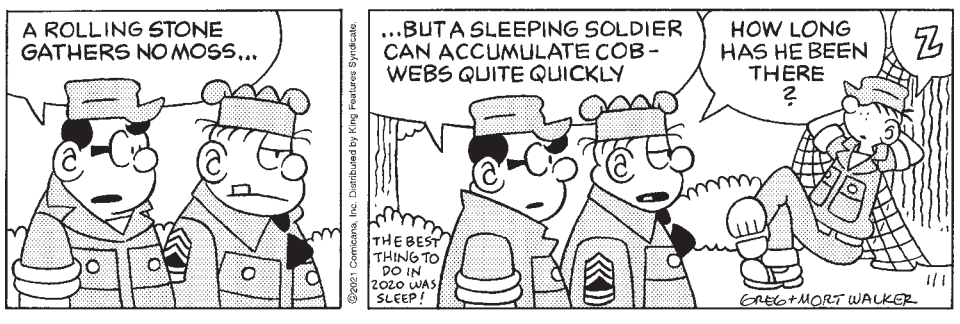
DON'T MISS

THIS WEEKEND'S

ISSUE

Included in this Saturday's edition

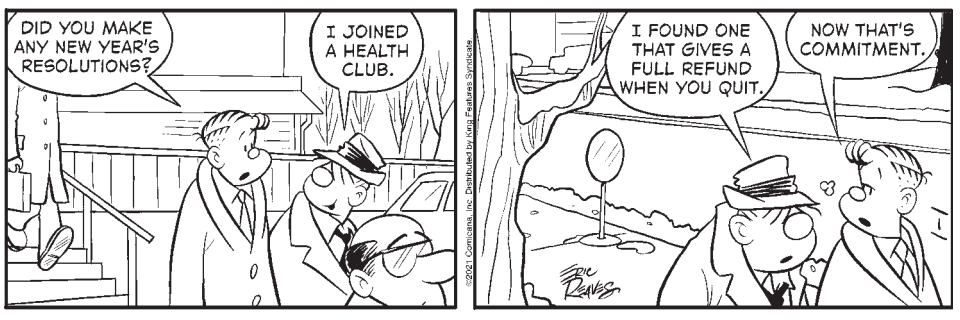
BEETLE BAILEY


A ROLLING STONE GATHERS NO MOSS...
...BUT A SLEEPING SOLDIER CAN ACCUMULATE COB-WEBS QUITE QUICKLY
HOW LONG HAS HE BEEN THERE ?
THE BEST THING TO DO IN 2020 WAS SLEEP!
©2021 Comicana, Inc. Distributed by King Features Syndicate.
GREG+MORT WALKER

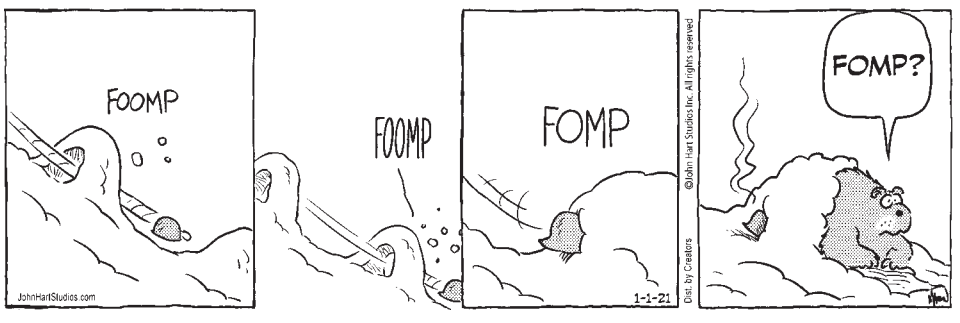
BLONDIE

WAKE UP, HONEY...IT'S 2021!
BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP
WOOF! WOOF!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
SETTING THE ALARM FOR 2022
© 2020 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World Rights reserved
www.Blondie.com
YOUNG MARSHALL

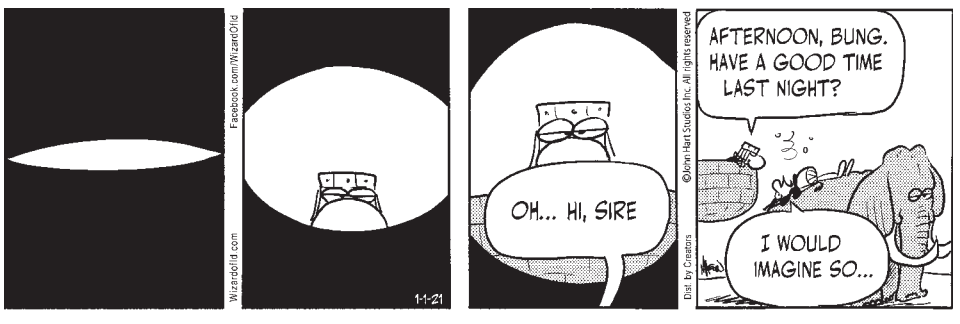
HI & LOIS


DID YOU MAKE ANY NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS?
I JOINED A HEALTH CLUB.
I FOUND ONE THAT GIVES A FULL REFUND WHEN YOU QUIT.
NOW THAT'S COMMITMENT.
©2021 Comicana, Inc. Distributed by King Features Syndicate.
ERIC REYNOLDS

BC



WIZARD OF ID



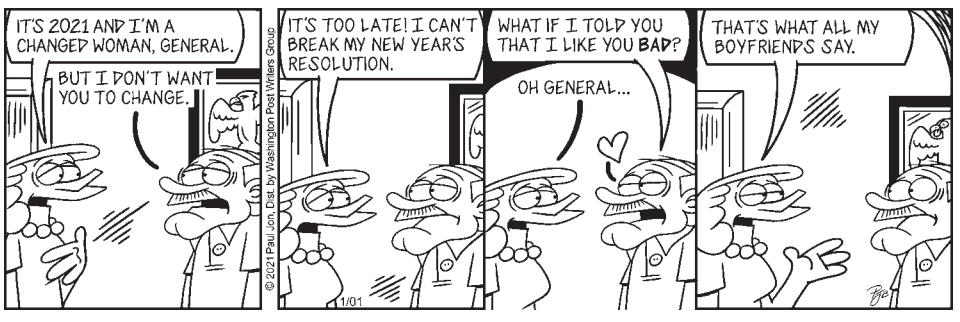
DILBERT

MY AUDIT OF YOUR COMPANY HAS UNCOVERED MANY DISTURBING THINGS.
DILBERT.COM @SCOTTADAMSSAYS
FOR EXAMPLE, DID YOU KNOW THE SALES DEPARTMENT HOLDS COCKFIGHTS ON THE THIRD FLOOR EVERY TUESDAY?
1-1-21 2021 Scott Adams, Inc./Dist. by Andrews McMeel
WHY HAVE I NEVER BEEN INVITED?
YOU'RE NOT A ROOSTER.

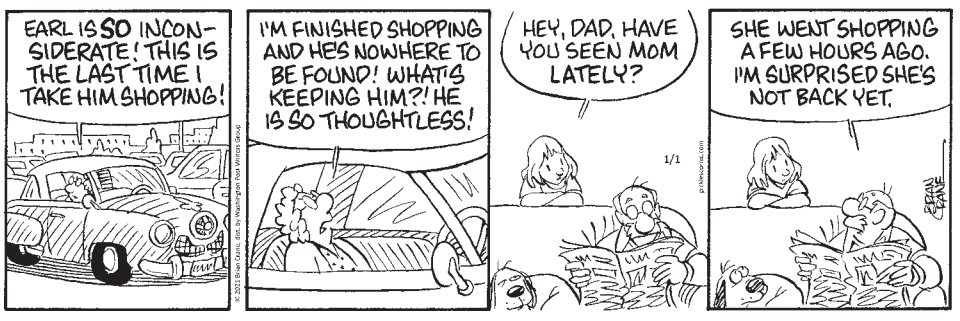
GARFIELD

I DON'T NEED TO SET AN ALARM
I WAKE UP NATURALLY
IT'S 2078!
OOPS
© 2021 PAWS, INC. All Rights Reserved.
Distributed by Andrews McMeel Syndication
JIM DAVIS 1-1

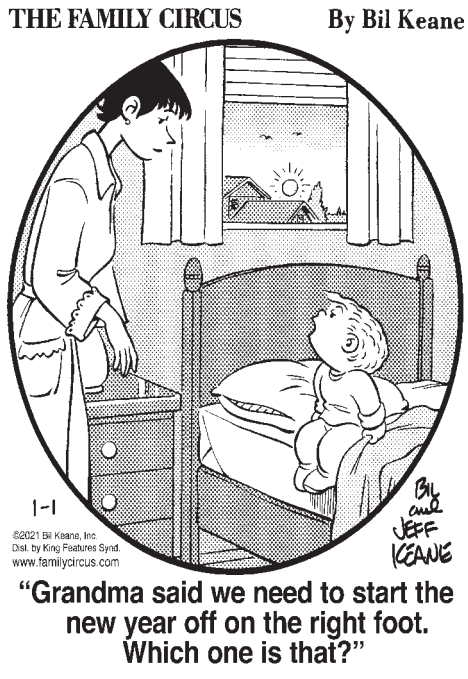
FORT KNOX


IT'S 2021 AND I'M A CHANGED WOMAN, GENERAL.
BUT I DON'T WANT YOU TO CHANGE.
IT'S TOO LATE! I CAN'T BREAK MY NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION.
WHAT IF I TOLD YOU THAT I LIKE YOU BAD?
OH GENERAL...
THAT'S WHAT ALL MY BOYFRIENDS SAY.
© 2021 Paul Jon. Dist. by Washington Post Writers Group
1/01

PICKLES

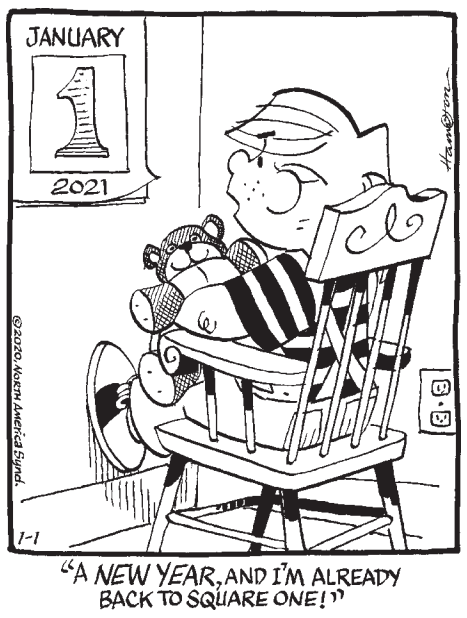

EARL IS SO INCONSIDERATE! THIS IS THE LAST TIME I TAKE HIM SHOPPING!
I'M FINISHED SHOPPING AND HE'S NOWHERE TO BE FOUND! WHAT'S KEEPING HIM?! HE IS SO THOUGHTLESS!
HEY, DAD, HAVE YOU SEEN MOM LATELY?
1/1
SHE WENT SHOPPING A FEW HOURS AGO. I'M SURPRISED SHE'S NOT BACK YET.
© 2021 Brian Crane, dist. by Washington Post Writers Group
BRIAN CRANE

FAMILY CIRCUS



"Grandma said we need to start the new year off on the right foot. Which one is that?"

DENNIS THE MENACE

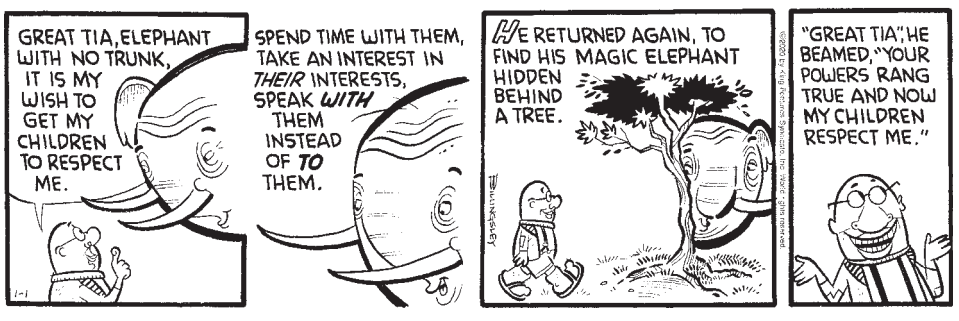


"A NEW YEAR, AND I'M ALREADY BACK TO SQUARE ONE!"

BABY BLUES

LET ME GET MY PHONE!
WHEEE!
NEIGH! NEIGH!
WREN NEEDS A PICTURE OF THIS IN HER BABY BOOK.
GOOD IDEA.
WE CAN PUT IT ON A PAGE WITH MY CHIROPRACTOR RECEIPTS.
DIDDY-UP!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

CURTIS


GREAT TIA, ELEPHANT WITH NO TRUNK, IT IS MY WISH TO GET MY CHILDREN TO RESPECT ME.
SPEND TIME WITH THEM, TAKE AN INTEREST IN THEIR INTERESTS, SPEAK WITH THEM INSTEAD OF TO THEM.
HE RETURNED AGAIN, TO FIND HIS MAGIC ELEPHANT HIDDEN BEHIND A TREE.
"GREAT TIA", HE BEAMED, "YOUR POWERS RANG TRUE AND NOW MY CHILDREN RESPECT ME."

ZITS

I'M GLAD 2020 IS OVER.
AMEN!
THE PAST IS BEHIND US! THE FUTURE IS ALL THAT MATTERS!
YOU STILL HAVE TO EMPTY THE DISHWASHER FROM LAST NIGHT.
AW, MAN!
SCOTT & BORGMAN
ZITSCOMICS.COM

HAGAR THE HORRIBLE

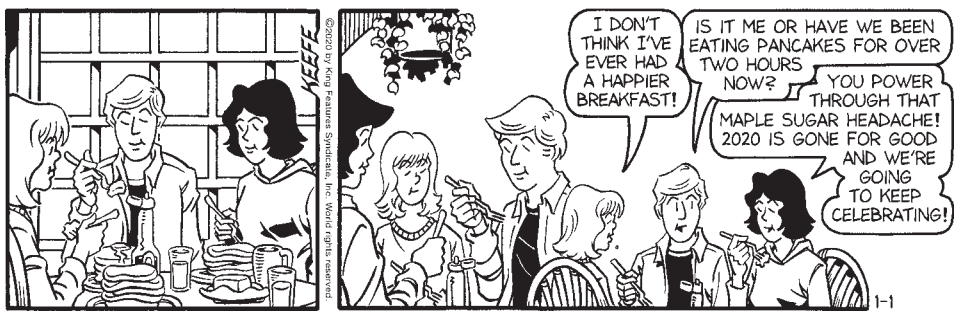
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

HOW ARE THINGS WITH YOUR NEW BOYFRIEND?
WELL, OKAY, I GUESS
EXCEPT HE HAS MORE HANG-UPS THAN I DO...
...THEN AGAIN, HE'S A TELEMARKETER
MIKE PETERS
©2020 Grimmy, Inc. Distributed by King Features Inc., go.grimmy.com

MUTTS

EARL, READ THE NEXT NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION I WROTE FOR YOU.
"SHTAY MOOCH'S BEST, BEST FRIEND FOREVER AND EVER"
1-1
Mutts © 2021 Patrick McDonnell. Distributed by King Features Syndicate

SALLY FORTH


©2020 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved
I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER HAD A HAPPIER BREAKFAST!
IS IT ME OR HAVE WE BEEN EATING PANCAKES FOR OVER TWO HOURS NOW?
YOU POWER THROUGH THAT MAPLE SUGAR HEADACHE! 2020 IS GONE FOR GOOD AND WE'RE GOING TO KEEP CELEBRATING!
1-1

Get outdoors!
Fishing • Hunting
Wildlife sightings
Upcoming events
Saturdays in
The Herald-Palladium

The Herald-Palladium CLASSIFIEDS

Classified Desk: 1-855-317-4292
Hours: Monday - Friday 8am-4pm EST
Saturday & Sunday 8am-11am EST

The Herald-Palladium

The Herald Palladium is looking for a reliable person to drive a company owned, 16 foot truck, to deliver newspapers from our local print site to The Grand Haven Tribune in Grand Haven, MI. The position is not responsible for the delivery of individual newspapers to subscribers. Drops are made at two post office locations, as well as, the local newspaper office. Experience operating an electric lift is desired.

This is a third shift position, approximately 3-7am, Tuesday-Saturday. Must have valid driver's license and have a clean MVR.

Job Type: Part-time

To Apply: Contact Bruce
btheisen@heraldpalladium.com
269-429-2400 ext. 553

NOTICE OF
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
REGULAR MEETING
AND PUBLIC HEARING
TO BE HELD ELECTRONICALLY

TO: THE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CHIKAMING, BERRIEN COUNTY, MICHIGAN, AND ALL OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS:

Please take notice that a regular meeting/public hearing of the Chikaming Township Zoning Board of Appeals will be held on Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. by **electronic remote access** pursuant to Public Act 254 of 2020.

Request for interpretation: Kristy Putnam, Peacock Place LLC, 13436 Red Arrow Highway, Harbert, Property Code 11-07-0010-0042-04-2. Applicant is asking for an interpretation of *Temporary Lodging* in a Commercial zoned property, and for a definition of the term temporary as referred to in Resort, Detached unit.

The public may participate in the meeting/public hearing through Zoom access by computer and smart phone using the following link:
Join Zoom Meeting
https://zoom.us/j/4147343272

Meeting ID: 414 734 3272
One tap mobile
+19292056099,,4147343272# US (New York)
+13017158592,,4147343272# US (Washington D.C)

Dial by your location
+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)
+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington D.C)
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
Meeting ID: 414 734 3272
Find your local number:
https://zoom.us/u/aeG7JF8D95

Members of the public will only be able to speak during the public hearing and public comment portions of the meeting/public hearing and such comments will be limited to three minutes per person during each opportunity to speak. The Chairperson will recognize all persons wishing to speak during the meeting/public hearing and public comment. If, prior to the meeting/ public hearing, members of the public have certain questions or wish to provide input on any business that will be addressed at the public hearing then such persons may contact the Zoning Board by email to buildingdept@chikamingtownship.org or by mail at P O Box 40, Harbert MI 49115 before January 15, 2021. A copy of the meeting material may be found on links on the Township's homepage at chikamingtownship.org, including the application for the interpretation also the Chikaming Township Zoning Ordinance/Map/Land Use Plan.
Chikaming Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services at the meeting to individuals with disabilities upon 72 hours advanced notice to the Township. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Township Clerk by email, phone, or mail.

Van Thornton
Chikaming Township Zoning Administrator

RESERVE THIS SPACE TODAY!

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

Sell Your

In The Classifieds!

UNFURNISHED APARTMENTS

Trail Creek, IN
2 Bedroom
apartment,
very nice &
clean, central air,
with nice yard, very
quiet neighborhood,
$600 a month plus
deposit, water and
sewer included,
renters responsible
for Nipsco, No Pets
first month plus
deposit due at
signing.
(219) 879-3700

HOMES FOR RENT

Coloma, MI
2 Bedroom
750 per month
plus security
call for details- Jim
269-208-1364

Coloma, MI
Small two bedroom
650 per month
plus security
call for details- Jim
269-208-1364

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

HOROSCOPE

By EUGENIA LAST

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31

Reaching a place where you feel at ease to do as you please and follow a meaningful path will encourage positive change. Take the initiative and put yourself first. If you are happy, you will spread joy to those you encounter.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) Do something to occupy your time that will bring about a positive and productive change at home. Set yourself up for success, not failure.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) Be open to change, but don't allow someone to push you in a direction that doesn't suit your needs. Life is about choices; choose to do what's best for you.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) Be original in the way you approach others, and you will command the attention and help you require to get things done. Protect against health risks and people trying to undermine you.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Be reasonable, and problem-solving will be within reach. Concentrate on being better. Choose a path that will lead to your happiness. Make peace, love and romance priorities.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Give others the chance to voice an opinion. It may change your mind as well as improve your relationships. Arguing isn't the solution; diplomacy will be necessary.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) At the first sign of trouble, take a step back and evaluate your next move. Don't trust someone offering false information. Focus on personal improvement.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) A bargain is only useful if you need what you are purchasing. Don't believe all the hype about something that sounds too good to be real. Don't add to your angst; concentrate on diminishing stress.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) Focus on love, self-improvement and preparing yourself for the best year ever. Opportunities are heading your way, but how successful you are will depend on your ability to make things happen.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Catching up will help you put your life in perspective and believe in yourself. Put an end to whatever isn't working for you, and start the new year on a positive note.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) Put plans for the new year in place, and the changes you want to make to your living arrangements will fall into place. Make love, romance and keeping the peace your priorities.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) Don't let uncertainty hold you back or unfinished business stand in your way. Embrace new beginnings, and make a decision that will impact your life. Don't linger when the time is ripe for change.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) You can bring in the new year paying more attention to those you live with and less to those urging you to be indulgent when caution is in your best interest.

LEGALS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

EMPLOYMENT

EDUCATION/ TEACHING

Special Education Paraprofessional

River Valley
School District
Employment info at:
www.river
valleyschools.org
Deadline: Until filled

White Space Sells

GENERAL HELP

Food Service Delivery Driver
Join our crew! The area's leading fresh produce food service distributor has both CDL and non-CDL positions available. Deliver to local restaurants and institutions. Must have a good driving record, and be able to lift product.
Home every night.
Good benefits.
Apply at Shelton's Farm Market,
1832 S 11th Street,
Niles MI.

FINANCIAL

ANNOUNCEMENT

Mccoy Brother's Jewelers will resume business when the vaccine arrives and is administered to the public at large.
Hang in there, folks.
Mccoy Brother's will reopen at that time, for the final run, of about one year.

Happy Holidays

In order to allow our employees time with their families for the New Year's holiday, our call center will be closing at noon on New Year's Eve, December 31. We will be closed on New Year's Day. We will reopen at 9am on January 4th, 2021.

The following deadlines for placing a Classified Liner is as follows:
To publish on Saturday, January 2nd the deadline is 11am on Thursday, December 31st, 2020.

GARAGE /ESTATE SALES

MERCHANDISE

BUILDING MATERIALS

LaPorte, IN
High heat bills
For Sale
Bubble Wrap Foil
Insulation
100 ft Rolls
4' 5' 6' wide
Insulate your
homes, pole barns,
dog houses, etc.
Half price, will
keep 97% of
heat in home.
cheap!!
219-324-0444

WANTED TO RENT/ BUY/TRADE

Benton Harbor, MI
3 Pillars Music is
looking to buy
record albums from
1970s to present,
older guitars and
comic books.
Please contact Tom
at 269-313-7001
or 3pillarsmusic@
gmail.com

BUYING JUNK
CARS & TRUCKS
Small Cars $200
Medium Cars $300
Large Vehicles $350
Call Larry at
(269)326-0510
Or Scott at
(269)208-9208

PETS

FARM

TRANSPORTATION

FIND A BARGAIN

IN THE CLASSIFIEDS TODAY!

Responding to employment ads that contain a Herald-Palladium box #

No telephone calls please! We will not reveal the name of the box holder.
(A) Reply with your sealed letter Addressed as follows:

Box (# that appears in ad)
c/o the Herald-Palladium
P.O. Box 128
St. Joseph, MI
49085-0128

If you wish to reply to a box number and NOT have your letter sent to certain firms, then: B) attach a note listing which firms are NOT to receive your letter; and (C) send every thing in ANOTHER ENVELOPE addressed as follows:

The Herald-Palladium
Classified Department
P.O. Box 128
St. Joseph, MI
49085-0128

If the advertiser is among the names you don't want to contact, we will destroy your sealed letter.

E-Mail Responses
You may also reply to ads with Herald-Palladium box numbers by e-mail. Do not attach your resume rather type it or copy & paste it directly into your e-mail program. Send your e-mail to: jobs@heraldpalladium.com

If you wish to reply to a box number and NOT have your letter sent to certain firms, then begin your e-mail with any company(s) where you do not wish to apply. Then include the Herald-Palladium box address as shown above.

Employment Advertisers Who Wish to Remain Anonymous
To protect our readers, Herald-Palladium policy requires that all companies list their names when placing ads in our publication. Employment advertisers who wish to remain anonymous must rent Herald-Palladium boxes so that we can insure our readers that they are not responding to their current employers or any other company to which they do not wish to apply.

Box Charges
Boxes are reserved for 30 days after last day of ad publication. The charge is:
$10. per box- you pick-up responses.
$15. per box - We fax all responses to you on a daily basis.
$25. per box- We mail responses to you once per week.
When readers respond to your ad via e-mail, we will forward them to you immediately if you provide us with an e-mail address or we will print and handle them in the manner that you request.

The Herald-Palladium

BUSINESS & SERVICE GUIDE

Grow your business!
Call Angelique
at 855-317-4292
Ex. 701,
to find out how

CARPENTRY

Richter's Carpentry
Specializing in basement remodeling, drywall, drop ceilings, doors & trim.
No job too small.
20+ years in Business.
944-0236

ROOFING

Demler Roofing
Over 40 Years Experience
Baroda, MI
269-422-2542
Licensed & Insured
Shingles are our Specialty

HOME IMPROVEMENT & REPAIR

Larry Morrow SR
Residential Builder
- Painting
- Kitchens
- Baths
- Drywall
- Roofing
- Decks
- Windows
- Doors
- Fences
- Electrical
- Plumbing
- Flooring
- Siding
- Basements
- Tub Refinishing

269-325-2242
Licensed & Insured

MASONRY

Michigan Concrete Masonry
Driveways, all concrete, brick, block, stone & chimneys.
All repairs, big or small
(We repair all leaky basements)
(269)993-8645

Complete Tree Service
- Senior & Veteran Discounts -

Willie Nearn Jr.
and Associates
269-532-8156
Making things happen by getting things done
FREE QUOTES & TREE INSPECTIONS

RESERVE THIS SPACE TODAY!

Extra Business is as easy as asking for it!

DO IT HERE, DO IT NOW!

2020
YEAR IN REVIEW

The Herald-Palladium

Celebrating

DiMaggio's
SAME LOCATION SINCE 1957
PIZZA & BURGERS
6410 N. M-63 • Coloma, MI • 849-1521

63 YEARS IN Business
Thank You!

Call Ahead – We'll Have Your Order Ready

COMPLETE MENU AVAILABLE FOR TAKE-OUT

CLOSED MONDAY'S STARTING DECEMBER 21ST UNTIL MARCH 1ST

HOMEMADE ITALIAN DINNERS
• SPAGHETTI • RAVIOLI
• MOSTACCIOLI • LASAGNA
• SANDWICHES • BEEF
• SAUSAGE • MEATBALL
• SHAVED HAM
• PIZZA REGULAR • THICK
• THIN
• OVER 16 ITEMS
• LIQUOR • BEER • WINE

www.dimaggiospizzaandburgers.com

Don Campbell / HP file photo

Work continues in December on the erosion problem that threatened the sidewalk and banks along the south end of Silver Beach in St. Joseph.

A year dominated by disaster

HP names top 10 stories of the year

Every year The Herald-Palladium asks the writers and editors here to vote on the top news stories of the year for our year-end special section. It is rare to see a unanimous pick for the top story. But there was little mystery about this year's top story, as of course the pandemic topped all ballots. In fact, the pandemic is such an enormous event that we split it into two entries – the health crisis and the corresponding economic fallout – and they both lapped the field of other ballot choices. Here are this year's top stories in Southwest Michigan:

1 **The COVID-19 pandemic** grips the world, including Southwest Michigan, with nursing homes and long-term care centers hit the hardest in terms of the death toll as area hospitals and county health departments mobilize to deal with the surge of COVID patients and organize various testing and contact tracing programs. Naturally, everyday life is severely altered or grinds to a halt as the coronavirus dominates daily existence.

2 **State-ordered shutdowns**, stay-at-home orders and partial shutdowns at various times because of the pandemic take a toll on Southwest Michigan businesses and nonprofit agencies, many of which must adapt or face ruin. The pandemic also forces the cancellation of most events, such as the Senior PGA Championship, the Blossomtime Festival, Krasl Art Fair and Berrien County Youth Fair.

3 **The outrage stemming from the death of George Floyd** in the custody of police in Minneapolis spreads across nation, sparking a series of peaceful marches and rallies in Southwest Michigan, where marchers vow to improve race relations and chip away at systemic racism. In Benton Harbor, a Black Lives Matter mural is painted on the street in front of the high school, though similar proposals fail in St. Joseph and South Haven.

4 **Near historic high Lake Michigan water levels** continue to hamper shoreline municipalities and residents,

Don Campbell / HP file photos

Shoppers wear masks as they browse among the shops in downtown St. Joseph in July.

forcing folks up and down the coastline to cope and seek expensive solutions.

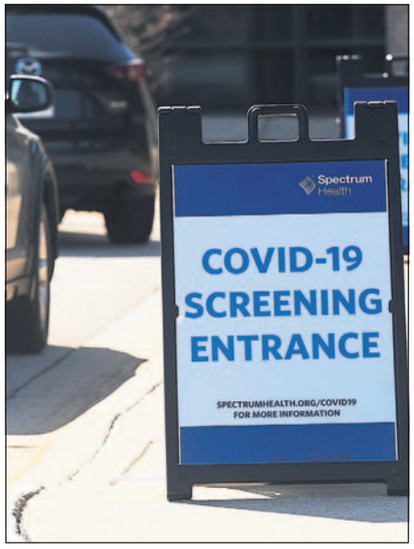
5 **In May, Whirlpool cuts a significant number of jobs** locally in response to the cratering world economy, though exact numbers are not released. It is one of several emergency moves the corporation orders, including unpaid two-week furloughs for salaried employees and early retirement buyout offers, that Whirlpool makes to maintain a healthy bottom line.

6 **Home sales here and across the nation surge**, spurred in part by city dwellers seeking refuge from the virus in more suburban settings. In Southwest Michigan, Chicagoans now working from home help send local sales to record heights. Prices also skyrocket as limited supply can't meet such strong demand.

7 **Turbulent Lake Michigan waters** claim a number of drowning victims in 2020, including three in one day along the stretch of lakeshore from South Haven to New Buffalo. South Haven experiences several drownings and near misses over the summer, prompting calls for greater safety measures there.

8 **Lakeland Medical Center in St. Joseph opens its expanded, state-of-the-art patient center,** which has been under construction for several years, in time to free up space for the increase in patients due to COVID.

9 A number of area shops gain approval and open up across the region to sell **recreational marijuana**, starting with a shop in Niles that gets to the line first in late January. A Niles man waiting in a long line on opening day is featured on the "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" TV show, proclaiming in the interview that he is "high as hell right now – on life."



Cars line up at a drive-up COVID-19 specimen collection center in March as the pandemic sweeps across Michigan.

10 **U.S. Rep. Fred Upton**, R-St. Joseph, handily dispatches Democratic challenger Jon Hoadley to win his 18th term in Congress, capping a strong election showing by area Republicans, despite the loss by incumbent President Donald Trump to Democrat Joe Biden in a bitterly fought race.

Pandemic has taken a terrible toll on small businesses

By TONY WITTKOWSKI
HP Staff Writer

Hundreds of Southwest Michigan businesses collectively lost out on a huge amount of revenue this year due to pandemic-related restrictions.

When the pandemic reached Southwest Michigan in mid-March, nearly every industry felt the effects. Slowly, month-by-month, more businesses were allowed to reopen. However, some businesses did not survive the extended shutdown.

Zach Morris, executive director for Market Van Buren, said several Van Buren County businesses have struggled more than others over the past 40 weeks.

"That's a long time. For restaurants, bars and cafes, that's about 70 percent of the year," Morris said. "A lot of these businesses have been either temporally closed or completely shuttered. A lot of businesses are reporting a drop in sales from $50,000 to $80,000 a month. What isn't dropping is the cost of rent or insurance."

Grants have provided an iffy lifeline for small businesses, mostly due to their lack of availability.

While some businesses received state and federal funding to remain open, Morris said the other 97 percent of businesses applying to grants were denied help.

The pandemic lockdown is going to have the highest degree of consequences for small businesses, in light of a 33 percent drop in consumer spending in Berrien County.

"In times of uncertainty, folks are managing their household budgets and curtailing luxurious expenses," said Jake Gustafson, Kinexus chief operating officer. "For every $3 spent in Berrien County last year, $1 is gone. Small businesses are notoriously tough to track. Expenses have stayed the same and revenue has dropped for these businesses."

This loss in revenue has led directly to closures.

According to Opportunity Insights – a group that measures the health of small business – and information gathered by Kinexus Group, roughly one-third of small businesses in Berrien, Cass, Van Buren counties were closed either permanently or temporarily at the end of July.

"This figure equates to over 750 establishments in Berrien, Cass and Van Buren counties, with over 500 of them in Berrien County alone," said Todd Gustafson, president and CEO of Kinexus. "This is a significant increase and a very alarming number to look at because small businesses are the heart of Southwest Michigan, and unfortunately, it doesn't stop there."

Around half of all regional small businesses were closed in mid-April due to the state-mandated quarantine. Because the number of closed small businesses remained high by July, Gustafson said the pandemic has proven to have a large and persistent impact on the local economy.

While there has been no new data for Berrien, Cass and Van Buren counties since July, statewide data shows that the number of small business closures was around 38 percent by the day before Thanksgiving.

There is no specific data to say how many local businesses have closed their doors permanently due to the pandemic.

Some industries have been luckier than others.

While restaurants and bars were tugged back and forth on closures, landscaping companies, barbershops and gyms reopened and stayed open a few months after the statewide shutdown. Eventually theaters were allowed to reopen in October, before closing again a month later.

According to data from the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget, Berrien County peaked at a 13.7 percent unemployment rate in June.

Every sector has been affected by the ongoing pandemic, with the leisure and hospitality sector hit particularly hard. Pre-COVID employment numbers for this job sector in the region showed 11,002 jobs, followed by a loss of 4,553 jobs in the industry.

There were also significant job cuts in other private service-providing sectors such as health care and retail, as primary care physicians, dentists, banks, hair salons and shop owners were forced to lay off staff or shutter their doors.

Contact: twittkowski@TheHP.com, 932-0358, Twitter: @TonyWittkowski

The year COVID came calling

How Southwest Michigan endured a once-in-a-century plague

By ALEXANDRA NEWMAN
HP Staff Writer

Don Campbell / HP file photos

Volunteers and staff with the Southwest Michigan Community Action Agency distribute food to hundreds of families in April during a family food distribution drive-thru held in Benton Harbor.

More than 250 Berrien, Cass and Van Buren County residents lost their lives to COVID-19 in 2020.

They sometimes died alone, without any of their family by their side.

The year 2020 will forever be associated with great loss, around the world, nation and here in Southwest Michigan because of the coronavirus pandemic.

As of mid-December, more than 14,000 people in the tri-county area have been infected with the virus, though the true total will never be known.

The official total represents about 5 percent of residents of the three counties.

While the situation has improved with new therapies and treatments for the virus, along with a vaccine now being distributed, the struggle is far from over as a savage winter surge in the virus shows few signs of slowing nationwide.

It is true that a large percentage of people who get the virus recover. In Berrien, Cass and Van Buren counties, more than 90 percent of positive cases have made, or are currently making, recoveries.

However, health officials and some of those who have had the virus are warning of long-term serious health effects of having COVID-19. Some have difficulty catching their breath months after they have recovered. Others experience chronic pain or don't regain their sense of taste or smell.

Area health officials have spent the year asking us to wear face coverings, stay 6 feet apart and wash our hands.

They've also learned some lessons along the way on how to be better prepared if, and when, another pandemic strikes.

"We'd love it to be the last pandemic, that's not the reality," Dr. John Froggatt, an infectious disease specialist at Spectrum Health Lakeland, said recently.

Froggatt hopes the country, and the world, will learn from some of the struggles early on with preparedness, like not having adequate supplies of personal protective equipment or hand hygiene supplies.

"I think our health care systems are, largely as a result of how our society is built, designed to run lean," Froggatt said. "We're not really designed to have excess capacity or storing supplies for the event of a pandemic. I think, some of the learning we would hope to take from this is, how do we do a better job of having a higher state of preparedness, like how do we ramp up production, and things like that."

Courtney Davis, deputy health director at the Berrien County Health Department, said that when she thinks back over the pandemic, she was really impressed by the resiliency of public health and health care workers.

"I'm just really really grateful for the teams that we are surrounded with, the resiliency that they've shown, and the care that they have for the community. That's what has supported them through all of these long hours and different jobs and roles that they never thought they'd have for that amount of time," she said.

Davis said she and other area health officials recognized in March that this would be long fight, and maybe having that marathon vs. sprint mindset earlier on would have been helpful.

Almost every facet of life was affected by the virus in some way, such as in-person learning at schools, and the restaurant and entertainment industries, in which many people lost their jobs.

Davis said it would be nice if society could learn from those struggles and put policies and systems in place to support families if it happens again.

"I think there's a lot we can learn on how we support our public infrastructure and families so that they can be successful even if there is a few months of abnormality happening," she said. "We don't have that depth as a society, and we've seen that pain across a lot of our families."

A sign along the bluff in downtown St. Joseph in June encourages social distance, as the state slowly opens after being shut down for months due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Davis said a benefit of the pandemic is that it created partnerships across many different sectors and industries.

"I've been grateful for all of the community organizations hat have stepped up and asked: What can we do? If this came around in five years again, we'd be that much stronger because we've built what would once be called untraditional partners. Now we have these deep partnerships and we know who to call," she said. "I think that's a testament to our community. Five more years, we'll be in even better shape."

Contact: anewman@TheHP.com, 932-0357, Twitter: @HPANewman

COVID-19 TIMELINE

Jan. 21: United States reports first confirmed case of the novel coronavirus.
March 16: Spectrum Health Lakeland starts canceling elective surgeries in anticipation of a surge of COVID-19 cases.
March 17: Sandi Patty, a Christian music singer who preformed March 8 at Andrews University, reveals COVID diagnosis.
March 21: Berrien County Health Department (BCHD) reports first two cases of COVID-19 in county.
March 22: BCHD reports two more cases, and that three of the total cases were linked to the Patty concert. Fourth case is unrelated.
March 23: Gov. Gretchen Whitmer issues "Stay Home, Stay Safe" order through April 13 to help stem virus spread.
March 25: The Van Buren/Cass District Health Department (VBCDHD) reports first two confirmed COVID-19 cases in Van Buren County.
March 26: Berrien County declares local state of emergency. First case of COVID reported in Cass County.
March 30: First death from COVID-19 is reported in Berrien County. Man identified as Vietnam War veteran Walter "Bud" Baker, 74, of Coloma.
March 31: First COVID death reported in Cass County.
April 2: First COVID death reported in Van Buren County.
April 6: BCHD reports second COVID death; announces some spread of the virus due to funerals.
April 8: Officials say COVID is disproportionately affecting Benton Harbor residents, and people of color.
April 9: Whitmer extends stay-at-home order through April 30. Berrien County at 80 COVID cases.
April 13: Outbreak reported at Hallmark Living in Benton Harbor, a long-term care facility (LTC).
April 15: A group of Southwest Michigan landscapers, construction workers and small business owners join "Operation Gridlock" rally in Lansing to protest Whitmer's COVID orders that classified their industries as non-essential.
April 17: Lakeland starts using convalescent plasma to treat COVID-19 patients; Whirlpool Corp. and U.S. Rep. Fred Upton help secure extra PPE for Lakeland.
April 22: Spectrum Health Lakeland resumes select surgeries, among other things, that were previously deferred in anticipation of patient surge.
April 24: Whitmer extends stay-at-home order through May 15. BCHD officials tout flattening of curve; predict longer, flatter curve in area.
April 30: Berrien County extends local state of emergency through May 31.
May 1: BCHD officials announce shift in focus to keeping curve flat. Berrien at 263 confirmed cases and 15 deaths.
May 5: COVID cluster is reported at West Woods of Niles, an LTC. Berrien marks 20th COVID death.
May 21: BCHD reports six COVID deaths in one day. Berrien at 40 total deaths.
May 22: Whitmer extends stay-at-home order through June 12.
May 26: Lakeland starts offering COVID-19 antibody testing.
May 28: National Guard/state police start voluntary COVID-19 testing in LTCs and jails.
June 1: Whitmer lifts stay-at-home order, effective immediately, with restrictions lifting within the next week for various sectors. Berrien at 629 cases and 52 deaths.
June 3: BCHD officials celebrate leading state in COVID testing per capita, and contact tracing and case investigation metrics.
June 10: Van Buren County adds 16 COVID cases in one day. A private gathering with 10-plus people was the cause, the VBCDHD said. Van Buren now at 174 cases and six deaths. Cass County at 97 cases and four deaths.
June 16: State report shows 41 out of Berrien County's 57 total COVID deaths have been LTC residents.

June 18: Berrien records three more COVID deaths. Death toll is now 60 – where it stays until July 23.
June 19: BCHD reports LTC outbreaks are mostly under control. Lakeland has just one COVID patient admitted.
June 26: BCHD reports fewest new COVID cases in a week since March.
July 1: Berrien watches small uptick in new cases, with 18 new cases being reported today.
July 10: COVID cases are back on the rise statewide. Recent clusters in Berrien linked to youth groups and LTCs. Whitmer toughens mask requirement.
July 15: Michigan reports largest single-day COVID-19 case tally in two months.
July 17: VBCDHD says Hispanic/Latino communities of Van Buren County have been hit disproportionately. BCHD warns of "tipping point" as new cases continue to mount.
July 20: BCHD announces hiring of more contact tracers as cases rise.
July 23: Berrien adds three COVID deaths after more than a month without any. Berrien death toll at 63. County passes 1,000 cumulative cases.
July 24: BCHD officials warn of "increase in viral activity" as percent positivity rates rise close to 5 percent. Hospitalizations peak during second wave at 14.
July 31: Berrien sees decrease in new cases this week, after seeing uptick for most of July.
Aug. 5: BCHD seeks to add nine positions with CARES Act money.
Aug. 10: COVID positivity rates in tri-county back to below 4 percent.
Aug. 14: Officials "cautiously optimistic" about virus stats. Hospitalizations drop to seven.
Aug. 21: Virus numbers assume "steady" pattern, which they keep through September.
Aug. 27: Berrien marks 70th COVID-19 death. Officials report testing turnaround times improving.
Sept. 3: Whitmer loosens more restrictions relating to gyms, fitness centers and high school sports.
Sept. 11: Berrien marks month of steady virus numbers; percent positivity rate drops below 3 percent. Lakeland treating nine COVID patients.
Sept. 18: New virus cases in Cass County begin to rise.
Sept. 25: Cass County's percent positivity rate hits 6 percent.
Oct. 2: A 1945 law used by Whitmer to respond to pandemic is declared unconstitutional by Michigan Supreme Court.
Oct. 9: Berrien sees increase in COVID cases this week, breaking with a trend that had been set since mid-August.
Oct. 16: Berrien, Cass and Van Buren all see spikes in new COVID cases, percent positivity rates.
Oct. 19: COVID-related deaths in Berrien County again start to mount.
Oct. 26: COVID patients at Lakeland start doubling each week. Positivity rates continue increase with rates between 6-8 percents in tri-counties.
Oct. 30: Berrien records highest weekly COVID caseload of the pandemic so far, with 341 new cases.
Nov. 2: The Center for Better Health opens in Benton Harbor thanks to a grant. It also funds new COVID testing site at Benton Harbor High School.
Nov. 4: BCHD warns of "unattainable level of case investigation to keep up with."
Nov. 6: Berrien County breaks records for new COVID cases. County at 3,106 confirmed cases and 86 deaths.
Nov. 9: BCHD shifts contact tracing/case investigation strategies to focus on vulnerable populations, asking general public to "take personal responsibility and action" if exposed to virus. Spread of virus starts to threaten in-person learning at K-12 schools due to staff and students in quarantine and a lack of substitutes.
Nov. 11: VBCDHD follows in shifting contacting tracing and case investigation priorities due to the inability to keep up with the growing number of new cases.
Nov. 13: Officials say community must work together again to flatten third COVID wave. State Sen. Kim LaSata tests positive for virus.
Nov. 15: State announces new three-week health order: "A Pause to Save Lives."
Nov. 18: Spectrum Health Lakeland now requiring symptoms for COVID tests due to "increasing demand for COVID-19 testing and a nationwide shortage of supplies."
Nov. 20: Berrien County records worst week of pandemic so-far. County has 4,967 confirmed cases and has recorded 99 deaths. Lakeland now treats an average of 55 COVID patients a day.
Nov. 27: Third-wave peaks in Berrien County at 1,124 new cases this week. Hospitalizations averaged at about 62 a day.
Dec. 2: Officials optimistic about arrival of COVID-19 vaccine. Area could begin getting doses by mid-December.
Dec. 4: New COVID cases drop off a little. Officials say "too soon to tell" if curve is flattening, citing a lag in testing.
Dec. 7: State extends pause order by 12 days. Lakeland begins offering outpatient antibody treatment for adults and teens with mild to moderate COVID symptoms.
Dec. 11: Case numbers continue on good trend, though a testing anomaly is making it difficult to get a full picture.
Dec. 12: Berrien County records seven COVID deaths in a day – one of the highest one-day death tolls of pandemic.
Dec. 16: Pfizer vaccine received by Spectrum Health Lakeland. First group of staff members is vaccinated.
Dec. 17: New COVID cases continue on downward trend in all three counties, though death toll continues its grim rise.

129 Years
1892-2020
ON A ROLL FOR OVER 100 YEARS!
VAIL
Headquarters
St. Joseph, Michigan
983-1595
521 Langley Ave. • St. Joseph

100 Years
Since 1921
August Pohl
AUTO PARTS
2225 S. M-139
Benton Harbor, MI
269-925-0035

96 Years
Est. 1925
MONTE PACKAGE COMPANY
★Riverside

63 Years
DiMaggio's
SAME LOCATION SINCE 1957
PIZZA & BURGERS
6410 N. M-63 • Coloma
269-849-1521
dimaggiospizzaandburgers.com

61 Years
Since 1959
Hasse's Towing Service
Call the Crew with the Trucks of Red, White, and Blue.
1151 Pipestone
Benton Harbor, MI.
(269)927-3681

56 Years
Since 1964
SOOS INSURANCE Agency LLC
269-983-3700
1610 Mall Dr, Benton Harbor
Located in the Community Insurance Bldg.

51 Years
Ibid County Electric
1523 Norton
Benton Harbor MI
269-925-0647

48 Years
4146 M-139
St. Joseph
Metzger Ins Agency
269-429-3160

40 Years
May 1981
Roger's
F·O·O·D·L·A·N·D
Corner of Hollywood & Glenlord
St. Joseph, Michigan
269-429-9661

32 Years
Since 1988
Gallery on the Alley
611 Broad St
St Joseph MI
269-983-6261

6 Months
FAITH reSTORED
Thrift Store
Mon. -Sat. 9am-6pm
Closed Sundays
1675 Phoenix Rd • South Haven
269-637-5300

A year of strife and reflection

In the wake of George Floyd's shocking death, Southwest Michigan joined in the national outrage, conversation

By LOUISE WREGE
HP Staff Writer

Don Campbell / HP file photo

Hundreds of people walk down Port Street in St. Joseph June 13 during a peace march held to protest police brutality and racial inequalities.

A video of the death of George Floyd on May 25 at the hands of four Minneapolis police officers sparked marches, vigils and town hall meetings nationwide, including here in Southwest Michigan.

From South Haven to Niles, thousands of people turned out to march, calling for police to get rid of the "good ol' boys" network and to start holding officers accountable.

"We are tired of seeing young black boys murdered," said the Rev. James Atterberry, pastor of the Brotherhood Church of God in Christ in Benton Harbor, during the first march in Benton Harbor on May 31. "... Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

While the call for action after Floyd's death was initially centered around police reform, it quickly became much more, with some people comparing what has happened to the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

A speaker during the June 7 march in Berrien Springs, where over 1,000 people showed up, called Floyd's death was a turning point.

"This is about all the lives that we've lost and everything that has hindered (people of color) and Black people from succeeding and having a fair shot," said Lonhi Sibande, a 2015 graduate of Berrien Springs High School.

Activists said that systemic racism has affected Black and brown Americans in every aspect of life for centuries, including in housing, criminal justice, health care, employment and education.

Gwen Swanigan, founder of the S.H.A.R.P. Foundation in Benton Harbor, called Floyd's death a breaking point that has led to a lot of hard but honest conversations being started.

Now that the marches have died down, she said the real work has begun, with much of it happening behind the scenes.

"Protesting is great, but we need to move from protest to progress," said she said.

One sign of progress was the creation of the Citizen Review Board by Benton Harbor city commissioners on Dec. 21.

Swanigan, who has been advocating for the CRB for months, said it will do more than listen to citizens' complaints against the city's public safety officers, who are cross-trained to be both police officers and firefighters. She said board members can help the community and police connect in many ways, including through neighborhood block clubs.

"A lot of programs will come out of this," she said.

Similar boards are being proposed in St. Joseph and Berrien County.

Benton Harbor Mayor Marcus Muhammad said that Floyd's death sparked conversations that were previously being ignored and avoided.

"As a result, people of goodwill acknowledge that we have institutional, systemic and societal racism that reeks in every corner of our communities," he said. "And they've committed not just to talk about it, but to try to find ways to address those issues."

Muhammad said he has talked with local business leaders who are looking for ways to be more proactive in fighting institutional racism and to bring about social change.

Whirlpool Corp. CEO and Chairman Marc Bitzer is among 38 other company CEOs who recently announced the launch of OneTen, which has the mission to train, hire and advance one million Black Americans over the next decade to sustainable jobs with opportunities for advancement.

Muhammad said that program is just one aspect of the wrap around programs businesses are planning to put in place to support Black Americans.

And the conversations continue.

"Most of the work is being done by the conversations in barber shops, churches and break rooms," Muhammad said. "It's people touching people."

Across the nation, those conversations led to dozens of Confederate monuments being removed since Floyd's death. The names of public buildings and sports teams have been changed.

In Southwest Michigan, Lewis Cass Intermediate School District trustees approved on Dec. 16 changing the ISD's name due to Cass' support in the early 1800s of slavery and of his involvement in removing Native Americans from their lands.

Lewis Cass ISD Superintendent Brent Holcomb said that while Floyd's name was not brought up during discussion of the name change, it's fair to say that they are loosely connected.

Liz Garey of St. Joseph said Floyd's death sparked renewed interest in Brave Talks, where Black and white people get together locally in small groups to talk about racism in a private setting. Garey was one of the first people to start hosting a Brave Talks group in her living room in 2018.

She said the groups are now meeting via Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which isn't as personable. And yet, because of the renewed interest, she said there's still a waiting list. She said more facilitators are being trained to host new groups.

Garey said trained facilitators are needed because the Brave Talks journey is deeply personal and very difficult.

Brave Talks grew out of the Community Grand Rounds speaker series, which focuses on health equity and is sponsored by Spectrum Health Lakeland and the Todman Family Foundation.

Jerry Price of Benton Harbor, a founder of Brave Talks, said he believes the November election of Rayonte Bell as the first Black Berrien County commissioner to represent St. Joseph was a result of the conversations since Floyd's death.

"I think our country is looking at its future through a different lens," he said.

Contact: lwrege@TheHP.com, 932-0361, Twitter: @HPWrege

Photo contributed / South Haven Area Emergency Services

First responders from South Haven Area Emergency Services and South Haven Police Department form a human chain in September in an attempt to locate 18-year-old Brandon Chambers of Jackson, who got caught up in the surf and drowned.

A long, tragic summer

3 drownings off South Haven beaches and many near misses prompt city to study safety options

By BECKY KARK
For The Herald-Palladium

SOUTH HAVEN — Record-high water levels and dangerous rip currents claimed the lives of swimmers up and down the shoreline of Lake Michigan this past summer.

Nowhere was that more keenly felt than in South Haven, where three drownings and more than a dozen water rescues occurred, prompting some to wonder what, if anything, the city and rescue personnel could do to address the dangers presented by the Big Lake.

The first drowning happened June 16 when 19-year-old Jazmyn Patterson of South Haven died while rescuing her 4-year-old cousin, who had fallen off a flotation device off South Beach.

A month later, on July 12, dangerous surf off North Beach claimed the life of 20-year-old Jaedon Odunuga-Evans of Lansing.

The third drowning occurred Sept. 6 when 18-year-old Brandon Chambers of Jackson was lost off South Beach.

Family members described Chambers as an experienced swimmer who belonged to the Wolf Lake Waterski Club. Patterson also was considered a strong swimmer by those who knew her.

Their deaths, along with a steady stream of successful, sometimes harrowing rescues, prompted some residents to question whether the city has done enough to warn beachgoers about the often dangerous conditions on Lake Michigan.

"Folks are wondering whether the city needs to take on more duties," City Manager Kate Hosier told the city council in September, following the drowning of Chambers.

Some people have suggested that the city place lifeguards on North and South beaches, something that some similar-sized cities in Michigan have done.

"I strongly support having lifeguards on public beaches," said Carol Sandy, whose son died a year ago while kayaking on Lake Michigan dear Indiana Dunes National Park. "Red flags and signs are not meant to be a substitute for lifeguards."

Currently, the city uses a warning system of color-coded flags to warn people when they should stay out of the water. The flags are monitored throughout the day as weather conditions change. There also are signs warning swimmers about the dangers of rip currents. But beachgoers, especially those from out of town, often ignore such warnings, perhaps not understanding the severity of the threat.

"I was fascinated to watch News 3 and people (who were interviewed) pleasantly unaware that if red flags are up that means danger and you could die," Mayor Scott Smith said at a recent city council meeting. "Red flags are there for a reason."

The issue of whether to fund lifeguards at the beaches is not new. It came up in July 2019 when South Haven resident Kameron Daugherty started an online petition to have lifeguards placed at the beaches. Daugherty said she did so after a 13-year-old boy from Ann Arbor had drowned off South Beach earlier that month.

"Could we as a community be doing more to protect our swimmers and support our emergency service teams?" Daugherty asked city officials during a city council meeting. "Is it not our duty to take all possible measures to ensure our swimmers are safe and informed?"

It appears Daugherty will be able to play a role into the city's latest efforts to try and improve beach and water safety.

A month ago, city council members authorized staff to form a committee to address the issue.

"The Beach Safety Committee has been formed with the purpose of reviewing current practices and making recommendations to the city council," Hosier said.

Besides Daugherty, the committee includes South Haven residents Chris Campbell, Tom Renner, Sean Russell, Tom Stegeman, Randy Timmer and retired Fire Chief Randy VanWynen.

The committee met for the first time Dec. 17 and will continue to meet over the next several months to sort out available options.

City staff has also begun canvassing other lakeshore towns to see what works best for them.

"There's a variety of things we can do to enhance safety," Hosier said.

Pandemic brings chaos to high school sports

In a bright spot, BH's Carlos Johnson named state's Mr. Basketball

By BEN SANDERS
HP Sports Editor

Benton Harbor's Carlos Johnson highlighted 2020 in local high school sports by winning Michigan's Mr. Basketball, but the year will be remembered more for what he never got the chance to do.

Johnson had led Benton Harbor to a 20-2 record and the No. 1 ranking in Division 2 when the COVID-19 pandemic brought a premature end to the state tournament just before the district championship round. That denied him the chance to repeat his 2018 heroics, when he made the winning shot in the Class B state championship game.

"It was very disappointing, because I felt we had an excellent shot at winning another state title," Johnson said after being named The Herald-Palladium's Senior Male Athlete of the Year in May. "I really wanted to get back to the Breslin Center."

Johnson and Benton Harbor were not alone in losing out on tournament opportunities because of the coronavirus. Michigan Lutheran's girls basketball team was 22-1 and had reached the Division 4 quarterfinal when play stopped, and several other local schools were set to play for boys district championships.

Lakeshore's wrestling team managed to have some success just before the virus brought everything to a halt. The Lancers reached the Division 2 team state semifinals, and had two individual state champions in 130-pounder Micah Hanau and 135-pounder Shane Williams. St. Joseph's Nolan Wertanen joined them as Division 2 champion at 103.

The spring season was canceled before it began, costing numerous athletes their chance to play.

Among the most notable was Bridgman's Mikaela Owen, The Herald-Palladium Senior Female Athlete of the Year. Owen, a track standout, didn't get to defend her Division 4 state titles in the 100- and 200-meter dashes. She also finished runner-up in the 400-meter dash and long jump as a junior.

"It was devastating," Owen said. "I and my teammates were so looking forward to competing."

Lakeshore softball also lost out on a much-anticipated season. With just one starter graduating from a team that finished as Division 2 state runner-up in 2019, the Lancers were looking to add an eighth state championship under coach Denny Dock.

Dock still got a chance to make some positive news in 2020, returning to his position as Lakeshore football coach after a six-year retirement.

The start of several fall sports was delayed, and football played just a six-game regular season. Dock was able to guide the Lancers to a district championship victory over St. Joseph, but the regional final at DeWitt was postponed multiple times before, ultimately, the Lancers opted out of the contest that was to be played in early January.

Contact: bsanders@TheHP.com, 429-1294, Twitter: @HPBenSanders

Don Campbell / HP file photo

Benton Harbor's Carlos Johnson was selected as Michigan's Mr. Basketball this year, as well as the 2020 Male Herald-Palladium Athlete of the Year.

Faith reSTOREd
NOT YOUR AVERAGE THRIFT STORE

At Faith Restored Thrift Store You will find quality Clothing • Furniture • Household Items • Toys • Plus Much More

Connected with Faith Fellowship Church & Partnered with WeCare.

DONATE
Your Gently Used Furniture
Tax Deductible • Free Pick Up • We accept Auto Donations & Clothing

Clip This Ad For $5 Off Purchase Of $20 or more

SHOP
1675 Phoenix Rd | South Haven
269-637-5300
Mon.- Sat. 8am - 6pm | Closed Sunday

Check Our FaceBook Page For Daily & Weekly Sales

Donation